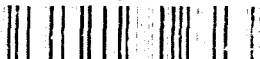


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VOLUME II

HISTORY OF THE 4TH BATTALION, 37TH ARMORED REGIMENT
IN OPERATION DESERT SHIELD/STORM

BY

LIEUTENANT COLONEL DAVID W. MARLIN
United States Army

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The 4th Battalion, 37th Armor, distinguished itself during Desert Shield/Desert Storm. The 37th Armored Regiment's last combat experience was in World War II under the leadership of LTC Creighton W. Abrams III. The battalion's high level of training and combat readiness, quality of personnel and leadership, and modernized equipment, prior to the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq on 2 August 1990, made it a prime choice for duty in Southwest Asia.

The battalion began preparing for deployment and combat on 3 August. A gradual escalation of combat preparedness ensued up to 8 November, when the division's formal deployment notification was announced by President Bush. The intensity and sense of urgency from 9 November 1990 to 8 January 1991 affected every aspect of the battalion's combat operating systems and family support operations.

The battalion built combat power in port facilities at Ad Dammam in Saudi Arabia and in a forward tactical assembly area near the Iraq border from 9 January to 17 February 1991. Detailed rehearsals were executed for a deliberate breaching operation against fortified Iraqi positions. Planned combat operations began on 19 February and continued until G+3 days on 28 February.

In one hundred hours of continuous combat, the battalion executed a deliberate breach of Iraqi defenses, executed an exploitation through Iraqi Republican Guard Army units, and cut the path of retreat of Iraqi Army units. The battalion destroyed over sixty tanks, fifty armored personnel carriers, thirty artillery guns, and captured over one thousand prisoners.

At Safwan, Iraq, the battalion assisted in securing and hosting the peace negotiations. Stability operations on the line of demarcation continued from 4 March to 20 March. The battalion continued to destroy enemy equipment and supplies. After being relieved at Safwan, the battalion became part of the VII Corps reserve.

The battalion returned to the Port of Ad Dammam on 28 April and redeployed for the United States on 12 May 1991. The battalion's homecoming was a major success.

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G-DAY + 2 DAYS

26 FEBRUARY 1991

Preparing to Move North

We started repositioning the battalion from PL New Jersey to PL Colorado about 0300 hours. In my estimation, considering the night move with the weather, it would take us two hours to get organized. At the same time, we had to be careful we were not leaving our rear exposed to the enemy. The companies withdrew from PL New Jersey one at a time, turned and faced west, and pulled into the staging area. It was a trickier operation than it seemed on the map. The brigade OPORD had us crisscrossing with TF 3-37 in order for us to be on their south flank when we started our move. I was very uncomfortable about the whole operation. We could never have achieved this move without the GPS. I kept the Command Group with the TOC for the rest of the night. Like my soldiers, I tried to get about one hour of sleep. We had now gone three consecutive days with little or no sleep. We had been wearing our protective overgarments for three days. Most of us looked blackish from the charcoal on our faces and hands.

At 0300 hours, the fog started to build and there was a light drizzle of rain. I was actually thankful it was cool because of our chemical suits and flak jackets. The rain also helped to keep the tank engines from overheating, kept the dust down, and prevented air filtration problems.

As the reports starting coming in on the companies' status, I could hear vehicles moving throughout the area. TF 3-37 would be moving simultaneously. Most of the commanders reported REDCON 1 and were moving. I mounted my tank, but the tank would not start. I grabbed my map, GPS, protective mask, LBE, and Kelvar and jumped into my HMMWV. I put CPT Paluso in the back of the vehicle, and pulled it up to the line of vehicles getting ready to move with the TOC. I needed to stay on the radio. I tried to walk back to the tank once to see if I could help in getting it started. It was only one hundred and fifty meters away, but I could not find it. It was just too dark.

Diagram #27. Ready to move north from PL Colorado.

Statement from CPT Torrence, C Co Commander, describing his company's attack to the north on 26 February 1991:

We woke up at 0400 hours on 26 February with an SP at 0500. At SP time, C66 would not start, C31 had thrown track, and C21 was lost. It was extremely dark and it took us almost fifteen additional minutes to sort things out. Finally, we moved off with C34 leading and I rode in C14 (my designated jump tank). C31, C66, and the 1SG were left in place and joined up at the staging area. We moved in a column with 3rd, 2nd, and 1st Plts. Using the Magellan GPS, we linked up at the staging area in time to see A65 burning.

At 1108 hours, we moved from the staging area in a line formation and concluded an uneventful seventy kilometer march through dust storms, fog, and stop-and-go traffic. We refuelled our rear tanks only during a hurried operation. We then moved forward to what was supposed to be our objective. It ended up being a staging area from which to continue the attack. At this time, we still had all fourteen tanks operational. C13 and C65 had lost their Thermal Integrated Sight (TIS) and were going to move to the center of the wedge for the continuation of the attack.

We moved out to the link-up points to form up with TF 3-37 and the rest of the brigade. CSM Stockton went to check out my tank. This guy was a hero. We moved about two to three MPH in the dark. I did not want to lose anyone. Daylight broke gradually. We halted and the entire unit was ready to start the move west and then north. We were delayed. COL Moreno told us to stand by. The information I had on our friendly and enemy situation was slim. Everything was an audible from the line of scrimmage from this point forward. There was no clear-cut enemy situation.

Changing Attachments

The sun came up, but I still could not see anything. There was too much fog. We had about fifty meters of visibility. I was instructed to release CPT Steffan, with A Co, 9th Engr Bn, to TF 2-16. About 0900 hours, a very fatigued CPT Clarence D. Turner, Commander of B Co, 1st Engr Bn showed up. The change effectively gave us an Engineer Company with all track vehicles with Aces, and put the Wheel Engineer Company with TF 2-16, to stay at the breach site and execute mop-up operations.

I also received instructions to switch the ADA Plts. MAJ Cook personally delivered our old ADA Plt to TF 2-16. The ADA Plt from TF 2-16 was lost and had not linked up with us. We learned a long time ago the necessity of having positive adult supervision when swapping units back and forth on the move.

My tank and crew linked back up with me. CSM Stockton pulled out my tank's fuel nozzle and cleaned it off. With an M1A1, I would not have had to worry about this. He also did something we are not supposed to do at our level of maintenance. This type of effort was becoming our way of life in the area of maintenance and parts.

CPT Beals called me at 0900 hours and reported he had a tank on fire. I could not see it. I went to the TOC and gave a few instructions on the move and then set out on foot in the direction of A Co. I found CPT Beals and LT McBroom with his entire crew standing by CPT Beals' HMMWV. They were watching A65 burn. The turret was turned to the side to place the ammunition away from the back deck. I saw no fire, only smoke.

After talking with them briefly, I was dissatisfied with their haste at abandoning the tank. I climbed onto the tank and made an inspection of the extent of the fire. The fire was down in the bottom of the engine compartment. I gave orders to get portable fire extinguishers and a daisy chain of men to start unloading the ammunition. I was upset because the crew was more than willing to just stand on the sidelines and watch a three million dollar tank cook. After about thirty minutes of frantic movement, the tank fire was out and the tank was still repairable. I went back to other business.

Sniper Fire

At M88 from TF 3-37 stopped by my position. He was fired at by an AK-47 to our rear. I sent a platoon from D Co back to eliminate him. They did not find the enemy soldier, but they did discover another bunker complex with the mortar we suspected was firing at us all night. They destroyed the mortar, a motorcycle, and some weapons. They reported the grid to TF 2-16 for them to mop-up later. LTC Hawkins came by and thanked us. He seemed to think the sniper was shooting at him and he was convinced we saved his life. He could be right.

Statement by LT Leonard, D Co Executive Officer, describing the search for an enemy sniper on 26 February 1991:

We were up all morning trans-loading 900 series ammunition in a light rain starting to fall the night before. With about one or two hours of sleep per man, we prepared for the 0500 hours SP. At 0415 hours, all the vehicles hung green chemlights from their tow pintles below the grills. By 0430 hours, the company collapsed onto the CP. At 0445 hours, we set off to

hit the SP. I did not understand why we were headed west to attack the Republican Guards. I thought they were northeast of us. Later, we turned north, and finally wheeled back east into the rising sun.

During the hours of darkness, one of the C Co platoons mistakenly went the wrong way. Approximately 0510 hours, the C Co Commander began to frantically fill the battalion command net with calls for his lost platoon. We informed him we had not taken them with us as he believed. They did stumble across us later, and at the first available opportunity, we returned the platoon to them.

Then the 1st Engr Bn panicked. They thought they had a fanatical sniper shooting at them. We thought they were over-reacting, but dispatched 1st Plt with D65 (and myself) to check it out. We put the grid for the suspected sniper into the Magellan GPS and followed it. We arrived on top of a hill with an old enemy position. There were burned out trucks and ADA weapons littered around the crest. There were bunkers built into sides also. The four of us (D65, D11, D12, D14) drove back and forth a couple of times. D11 thought he saw dismounts and got ready to shoot at them. They turned out to be British soldiers. Later, D12 found a motorcycle and he shot it up just for good measure. An intact mortar was located by D14. I decided not to shoot it because the Engineer Bn was only five hundred meters beyond it and in the line of fire. We found entirely too many bunkers for a tank battalion to clear. We suggested to battalion the need for some infantry to dismount and clear the location.

After two hours of searching, we convinced LTC Marlin to let us return to the company. We then participated in the battalion movement eastward.

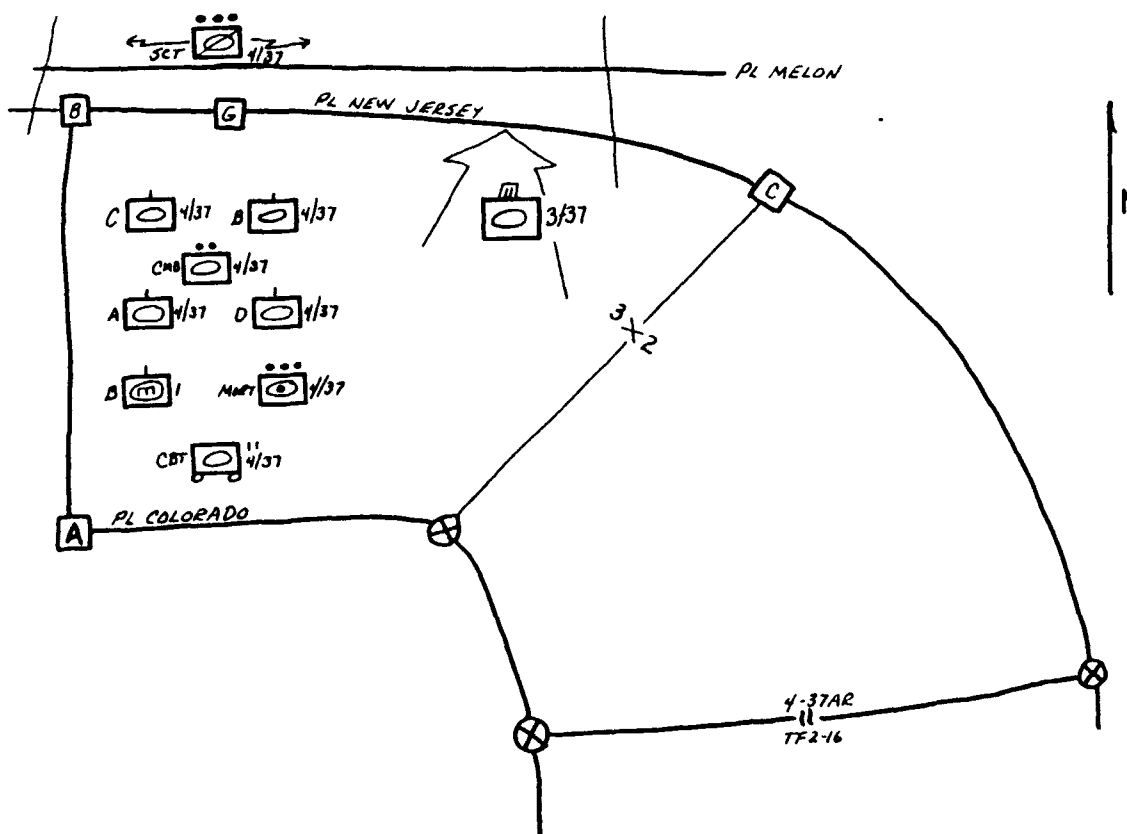


Diagram #28. Attacking to the northeast.

Press the Attack

We received the order to move at 1100 hours. I had the battalion in a box formation. C and B Cos were in the lead, abreast, platoons in column. A and D Cos trailed and the Command Group was centered behind C and D Cos. The Scout Plt was staying about one to two kilometers to our front and abreast of the TF 3-37 Scout Plt. Over the next one hundred kilometers, we were on the outside of a large turning movement going west and then northeast. We would guide on TF 3-37, as they had the inside track. I talked constantly with LTC Gross over the brigade command net. This was a real team effort.

As we took off, we approached the VII Corps MSR and thousands of CSS vehicles moving north. We approached them perpendicular to their movement. We passed through them at the blink of an eye and maintained formation. It was a truly beautiful maneuver. I was really proud of the soldiers. Then we did it again and again. Several times during the move, we hit large unit formations. We passed them without a second thought and regained our formation. It was a powerful statement as to our maneuverability. We caught up with the entire VII Corps combat units and were back into the fight. Nothing could stop us. We were not allowed to make a single maintenance stop for the first seventy-five kilometers.

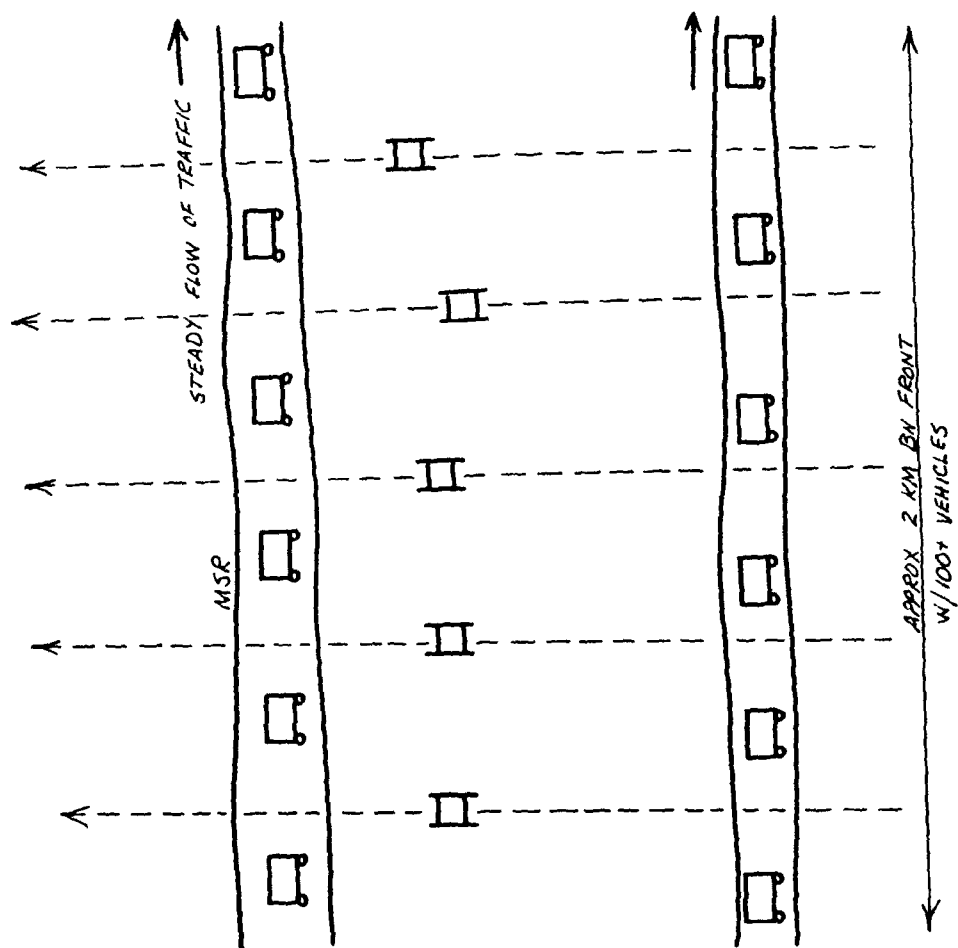


Diagram #29. Passing through units on the Corps MSR.

Statement by LT Ward, the Scout Plt Leader, describing his platoon leading the battalion to the northeast on 26 February 1991:

On the morning of 26 February, the platoon got up at 0400 hours after a couple of hours of sleep. We were prepared for movement and departed out of our position at 0430 hours. We moved out of the battalion area and to our link-up point with the TF 3-37 Scout Plt. We arrived at the staging area at 0530 hours, and at 0600 hours the TF 3-37 Scout Plt showed up. We were not able to exchange very much information since the waypoints and graphics for the operation changed after our movement out of the battalion area.

After the battalion closed on the staging area, I moved to the TOC track and received the new graphic changes and grid locations. I moved back to the platoon and provided the Track Commanders with the changes.

At approximately 1100 hours, we moved out and linked up with the TF 3-37 Scout Plt. We received orders to move on line with their Scout Plt and I soon found myself doing the "Bradley Blitz." Their Scout Plt believed in doing things without caution and moving as fast as possible between two points. We quickly moved across PL New Jersey, PL Omaha, and PL St. Louis. About 1445 hours, we were set on PL Cheb. We set up a hasty screen and immediately received word to move to the TOC's location.

After arriving near the TOC, I got about an hour to do some quick maintenance. Soon after, LTC Marlin walked up and handed me a piece of paper and said to move to this grid and set up a battalion AA. I said, "Roger, out," and the platoon immediately began moving. I worked up some quick grid locations for company boundaries on the way and used a chemical light system for marking the boundaries. Upon arriving, I put out a quick plan for guiding the battalion in, and moved out to mark the boundaries.

I soon found the Magellan GPS was unable to locate satellites after 1800 hours. I reverted to the compass and odometer. As we finished putting out the last of the chemlites, I heard the battalion had reached our area. LTC Marlin came across the net and told us to simply prepare for refuel and continuation operations. I knew at then either our military was routing their's, or we were into a heavy fight to finish.

We waited for several hours for the fuel trucks and suffered through LTC Marlin's grief on the net when he asked for fuel. Finally, the fuel arrived and we were quickly refueled and back out in front of the battalion.

Refuel

When we reached our first objective, we halted for fuel. COL Moreno was pressing us to move faster. His sense of urgency caused me to believe a partial refuel was sufficient. I thought we were going only another twenty-five kilometers to the next objective on my map and he wanted us there before dark. I kicked the Scout Plt out with no refuel as an advance party to the next objective. The time was 1600 hours.

We moved the next twenty-five kilometers in the dark. The fuelers began trans-loading the remaining fuel into one or two tankers, and the empty ones went to a refuel point and returned. The trans-loading of fuel took longer than anyone expected. As we were moved to the next objective, I broke away from the battalion and reported to COL Moreno. At the brigade TOC, COL Moreno said we would continue to push forward in three hours. I hurried back to the battalion.

Time was wasting. The HEMMTs were still trans-loading fuel at the last stop. Our tanks had only a little fuel, not enough to continue. I was desperate over the next three hours. I was constantly questioning MAJ Garrity, CSM Stockton, and CPT Hall for answers and results on the fuel trucks. Eventually, CSM Stockton led the remaining fuel HEMMTs to us by odometer and compass. We were using radios and flares to bring him to us.

Time was critical. LT Thompson departed with the empty HEMMTs to refuel them. We wasted two of our three hours just getting the fuel. COL Moreno was ready to move. I told him I needed more time.

COL Moreno then chose to refuel his own Command Group vehicles off our HEMMTs and went to the one company taking the longest to refuel--B Co. He delayed us another twenty minutes without realizing it. I was having a rough time. Few people realize how long it takes to fuel up fifty-nine tanks through four gas caps. Fuel transfer pumps and lack of replacement pumps continued to haunt us.

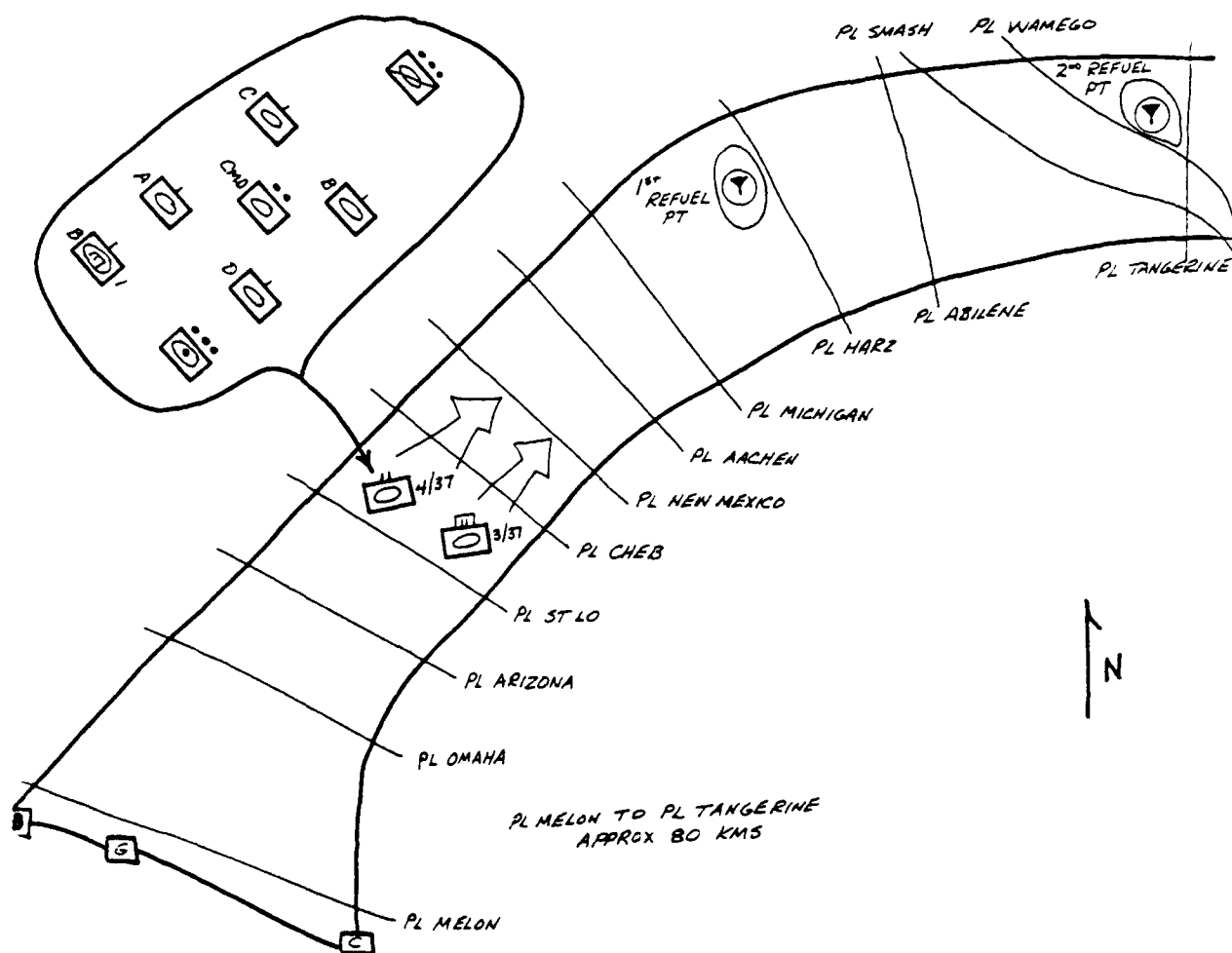


Diagram #30. Refueling the Battalion.

Statement by CPT Torrence, the C Co Commander, describing his company's actions on the night of 26 February 1991:

At 2100 hours on 26 February 1991, we continued the attack at the left front flank. The company moved out with fourteen tanks. C65 and C13 were moving center of the company wedge because they had no night fighting capability. During the move, we encountered the combat trains of a forward unit and were split from the base company. As we came around their trains, we were forward of the formation. We headed south to link-up again. In doing so, we over-shot our main body and split the formation.

We had our XO with B Co after we separated. With the help of the GPS, we finally linked up when the formation stopped just behind the FLOT. It was approximately 0030 hours on the 27th of February.

When we moved again, we passed the FLOT, held by some cavalry units, by two hundred meters. We hurriedly backed up behind them and paused for about a half hour. During this time, we were moved back to our rear because we could not find the battalion fuelers.

When we started moving again, B Co separated from us by shifting to the south. In order to regain contact, I moved forward to the right and destroyed a BMP. When everyone saw the explosion, they had a reference point to guide on. We quickly consolidated. We held the line throughout the night and received fuel around 0600 hours.

Statement by LT Corbo, the B Co XO, describing his company's actions on 26 February 1991:

It was the third day of the ground war against Iraq. The company spent most of the early morning hours refueling and uploading with the new M900 series sabot rounds. These were supposedly the "silver bullets" to defeat the T72 tank. Approximately 0330 hours, we had an orders brief in the 1SG's HMMWV for the upcoming mission. We were to be on the brigade left for the continued attack. About 0400 hours, we collapsed our perimeter and prepared to move. The moonless night made the use of night vision equipment all but useless. The company attached orange-lensed flashlights to the tanks to help aid in command and control.

The company uncoiled from its position in standard order: 2nd Plt, 1st Plt, 3rd Plt, and the HQ tanks dispersed between the platoons. We made the battalion SP of 0600 hours and moved to our staging area. We "herringboned" [a stationary formation dispersing the vehicles] in position at approximately 0615 hours and waited for further orders.

Around 0730 hours, we received a change to the graphics. Another meeting was called to get all the information to the platoons.

The battalion made its SP at 1108 hours, using a box formation. B Co was on the right, tying into TF 3-37. The move was uneventful except for the sandstorm, making visibility difficult with our right flank unit.

As we were rolling through a hilly area, I noticed the crew of B-31 bailed out of their tank. I also noticed smoke coming from under the back deck access plates. I ordered my driver to advance to B-31. I grabbed my fire extinguisher and jumped to the ground. I had SGT Reid re-mount the tank and traverse the turret until the ammunition was away from the fire. I pulled off the access plates and put out the fire. I ordered the Platoon Leader to jump tanks, and reported the location of the down vehicle.

I raced forward to re-join the company formation. After about a half-hour, my tank [B65] went down with a fuel problem; and three hundred meters away, B22 blew an engine. My gunner flagged down a fuel HEMMT and topped off our fuel tanks. The driver re-set the circuit breakers and we were able to move again. I co-located with B22 and made radio contact with our company. LT MacMullen was dispatched to my location to guide me back into position.

At approximately 1720 hours, I rejoined B Co as they finished refueling. We were able to do a quick refuel, regain the formation, and continue with the attack.

Because we were being pressed to continue our movement, the company was unable to completely top off. We continued to march until about 1800 hours. We stopped to wait for our fuel assets to catch up with us. We finished refueling completely at about 2045 hours and prepared to continue the mission.

Fighting the Republican Guard

LT Thompson became lost. He had thirteen fuel HEMMTs with him critical for our survival. He incorrectly induced the wrong map sheet number in his GPS and eventually went eighty kilometers off course, cross-country. I was stressed out over fuel. It would be my most humbling experience of the war. After twenty years of training, I could not fuel my battalion. I was constantly pressuring MAJ Garrity, CPT Hall, CPT Clidas, CSM Stockton, and anyone else within earshot. I was angry, disappointed, and humbled by one miscalculation. Furthermore, we did not realize the full degree of the error and was not aware the situation would last over forty-eight hours.

Statement by CPT Beals, the A Co Commander, describing his company's actions on the attack to the northeast on 26 February 1991:

Aces [A Co] were set on PL New Jersey. Our mission was to move to a staging area back toward PL Colorado. We moved out at 0500 hours in a dark and foggy morning. Getting out of the defensive position took about twenty minutes. It was too dark to locate the position using the night vision goggles. We made our move in a company column formation and pulled into the staging area around 0600 hours.

A65 caught on fire as it passed the Command Group. The call of "fire" went over the company net. I pulled out of column and could see a six foot flame shooting out from under A65. The crew began their abandon tank drill and the #1 fire extinguisher shot failed completely. The #2 shot did not put out the fire. From the amount of flames shooting out of A65 and the failure of the main fire extinguisher and the crew portables, I told the crew to stand away from the fire. It took seventy-five percent of my company's fire extinguishers to finally put out the fire. The fire fighters were led by LTC Marlin, with the help of SPC Steisel pulling out the V packs. Once we got the V packs out, the fire was brought under control. I

remember my MOPP suit was covered with thick black soot after we finished with the fire.

We thought A65 would be easily fixed, but it turned out to be a complete write-off. We cross-leveled crews. The XO took A24 and we converted it to secure radio nets. SFC Fernandez jumped to his wingman's tank. SSG David K. Squire and the remainder of A24's crew stayed with A65. We would not see them again until we got back to Rear Assembly Area (RAA) Huebner.

Around 1100 hours, we supported as the corps reserve. We moved in a box formation with Certain [C Co] in front of us and Death Dealer [D Co] to our right. We expected an all-day attack.

PL Achen was a planned stop for maintenance. The mission changed and we were told to refuel immediately and be ready to move in twenty minutes--an impossibility. As soon as we finished refueling, we began to move again in the same formation for twenty-five kilometers. This time we stopped again to refuel. CSM Stockton brought the fuelers in around 1830 hours using flares and strobe lights. At 2000 hours, the fuelers arrived and we topped off again and executed a little maintenance.

We lost our company trains during our second move. The maintenance truck broke down and my Black 8 [Maintenance Sergeant] stopped to assist them. 1SG Hurley was returning the fuelers. Bandaaid's [Medical Plt] M113 APC was broken and was not coming up again soon. 1SG Hurley linked up with Ace 8 [SSG Glover] and Ace Bandaaid [SGT Leonard Hendrix]. I told 1SG Hurley to pick up Black 8 [SSG Glover] and follow on to link-up with the company. SGT Hendrix called me and said, "You mean you are going to leave me here all alone with no guns!" I told him I would try to recover them. If not, then he would be safe until the BMO cleared the route. 1SG Hurley recovered him to a friendly unit. By the time we moved to link-up, we were more than one hundred kilometers from him and the maintenance team. In our second refuel, we set in a company line, platoons in column and topped off. Hoping for some sleep, I heard LTC Marlin come over the radio net to say we were going to launch again as soon as we topped off.

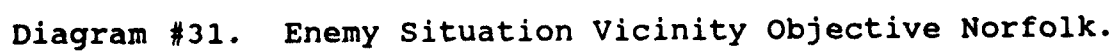
On the night of 26 February, we started out for a long night movement. The 1SG went back to recover part of the trains. I would not see him again for twenty-four hours. The company began moving Certain

[C Co] with Death Dealer [D Co] to our right. The company formation was platoons in column for better command and control. The ADA Vulcans were behind me in the middle of the formation. It was a long movement, lasting until 0300 hours on 27 February 1991.

En route, we lost contact with Certain [C Co] when another unit's combat trains passed in front of us. We were guiding our movement by using the thermal sights. We picked up what we thought was Certain [C Co] and continued our move, only to find we were in the Dauntless [TF 3-37] formation. I located where we were by calling over the company net to get a number from one of the tanks nearest us. Blue 1 [3rd Plt] called and told me it was number 53 on the side of the tracks. I knew we had gone too far to the right. I gave the orders to execute a U-turn and then we shifted to the left. We passed our battalion trains and I fixed our position from them. We executed a right turn and linked back up with Death Dealer [D Co]. A little later, Certain [C Co] passed through us and resumed the lead.

There was a terrific fight in front of us. I looked to the rear of a tank to our left front and we were only twelve hundred meters from the front line trace. I kept saying to my crew to be ready. When we moved from here, we would be out in front and have to clear the zone of the enemy. We sat there waiting, but the word to launch never came.

Later, the fuel status for the battalion hit black [no fuel]. We would never launch the attack. The command net was crackling with concern over fuel status. At 0530 hours, I still had no contact with 1SG Hurley. I called my Blue 4 [3rd PSG] and told him if 1SG Hurley did not show up in thirty minutes, or we did not contact him, then he was the new Black 7 [1SG]. We could not establish contact, and at 0600 hours, I pulled the Platoon Sergeant from 3rd Plt. I talked to SFC Earl C. Gallow. I told him he was the new 1SG and gave him three missions: get fuel for everyone; rebuild a combat trains (at this point, the combat trains consisted of a HMMWV); and, once refueled, ensure the HEMMTs were handed off to the Sapper [engineer] elements. I gave him A6 [HMMWV] and we re-shuttled the crews in 3rd Plt. SGT Walter S. Williams took command of A34. SSG Gaylon J. Lecuyer assumed the job of the Platoon Sergeant. We refueled and were set to launch the next attack on the morning of 27 February.



The next move through the dark was about fifty kilometers. COL Moreno was visibly impressed. We handled ourselves in the dark as well as we did in the daylight. We were in a box formation, companies abreast, platoons in column. We came up on the rear of 1st Bde's combat vehicles. We even passed through their trains in the dark. D Co separated momentarily at one point, but regained the initiative after about thirty minutes. We were close enough to read the unit's bumper markings in front of us.

They were attacking. I pulled the Scout Plt from the front and dispatched them to our left flank for security. Explosions were everywhere. The 1st Bde was in the attack and we were part of it by our proximity. BOOM! CPT Torrence shot and killed a BMP at four hundred meters. While there were no major tank battles, singular engagements were sporadically executed throughout the night. Several other engagements were shot, but we were extremely careful about shooting because of the units in front of us.

We finally stopped and provided overwatch at 0300 hours in the morning. Nobody slept, and our fuel situation was critical. We began working with TF 3-37 to take their remaining fuel and attempted to bring up our few remaining fuelers. My own tank was on empty. Soldiers and leaders were working hard to make it all happen, but it was a dark, scary, and a desperate situation.

Statement by CPT Wock, the D Co Commander, describing his company's actions during the night attack of 26 February 1991:

At approximately 2100 hours, the battalion began to pass through the field trains of some of 1st Bde's units. They were in columns and passing from left to right on an angle almost parallel to our axis of advance. D Co was following B Co, as it linked into TF 3-37 on our right. Two of these columns passed between B Co and D Co. We slowed down to let them pass. Rear echelon soldiers often get nervous when tanks cut up their columns and we did not want to cause an incident. Then we lost contact with B Co.

Once the trains passed, we sped up to re-establish contact. In the meantime, TF 3-37 moved to the left (north) and forced B Co to move left. When we accelerated, we ran into the rearmost TF 3-37 tanks. We were unaware who they were until a short halt later on. We closed enough to read their tactical signs through night vision goggles. Listening to the battalion command net, I was able to determine what happened. We went into a column and headed north.

After approximately two kilometers, we saw our battalion vehicles, and actually passed in front of them before looping around them and regaining our position behind B Co and to the left of TF 3-37. Shortly thereafter, the battalion continued east with D Co in the correct position.

Statement by LT Ward, the Scout Plt Leader, describing his platoon's actions during the night attack of 26 February 1991:

After refueling the BFVs and moving back out in front of the battalion, I was given orders to move along a series of CPs and to link-up with the rest of 1st Bde. We moved out immediately and linked up with the trail elements of 1st Bde. We continued movement for some time. At approximately 0300 hours, 27 February, we were given instructions to set at one grid location. We stayed in position for approximately thirty minutes and I began to notice their battalion's movement took them to the south and past us.

I called LTC Marlin to receive information and was told to move on the battalion's left flank to serve as a flank screen. As I called the platoon with

the FRAGO mission, I received answers from everyone but HQ234. I realized, due to sheer exhaustion, the crew had fallen into a slumber. I moved back to their vehicle and got them back up on the net.

SSG Firestone moved out in the lead again. After some time, we were linked back up with the battalion. Fireballs to our front lit the sky as 1st Bde moved through the area. We heard over the net a BFV was destroyed and the "pucker factor" rose another notch.

We finally worked our way onto the battalion's flank and moved about three more kilometers before the battalion stopped in place at approximately 0300 hours. We got some sleep and watched as the fireballs continued to light up the sky.

Statement by LT Powers, the Mortar Plt Leader, describing his platoon's actions during the night attack of 26 February 1991:

After the last refuel around 2100 hours on the 26th, we moved behind Death Dealer [D Co] in platoon column. We were doing fine just being able to keep up with Death Dealer. Traveling at top speed in M106 Mortar Carriers, we were unable to keep up with the battalion. Fortunately, the battalion had broken contact with TF 3-37. The battalion went through a trail element of another division. Ace [A Co] and Death Dealer [D Co] went right and followed the convoy. I did not know this and continued on my course and fortunately found Battle [B Co]. I was able to link-up Death Dealer. We moved on until about 0300 hours. We waited until 0700 hours to move out again.

Statement by CPT Bond, the Battalion Assistant S3, describing the attack on 26 February 1991:

At 0800 hours, we copied the graphics issued the night before on PL New Jersey. At 1120 hours, the TOC moved out following the Mortar Plt. At 1630 hours, we stopped in the vicinity of PL Cheb and began refueling. Refueling was not complete when the battalion was forced to continue to PL Harz. The TOC was several kilometers from the Mortar Plt (the grid location we believed they were at). We moved in their direction and did not find them. I called the Mortar Plt to get their new grid location and moved out to link-up. In the meantime, the battalion began moving. Within minutes, LTC Marlin directed the companies to

increase their speed to twenty MPH. The TOC was unable to keep up and arrived at PL Harz around 1815 hours, well behind the tank companies. We then waited for the fuel to arrive.

Statement by CPT Clidas, the HHC Co Commander, describing the movement of the battalion field trains during the attack on 26 February 1991:

The field trains began their move with the BSA at approximately 1200 hours, 26 February. The brigade was attacking to the northeast, with the BSA following in support. The movement continued throughout the day.

At approximately 2000 hours, 26 February, the Support Plt Leader and I convoyed thirteen fuelers from the battalion's FARP, back to the BSA's new location. These fuelers would refuel, then move back to the combat trains. We arrived at the BSA at approximately 2100 hours, 26 February 1991.

After refueling the thirteen fuelers, the Support Platoon Leader, LT Thompson, told me he had the grid location he was to return to. He received these grids from CPT Hall. LT Thompson then departed from the BSA with his thirteen fuelers, en route to the combat trains. He never linked up with the combat trains. He had not been given grid zone designators by CPT Hall; thus, the grids he had were incorrect.

Change of Mission

At 0630 hours, I reported to COL Moreno at the brigade Command Group location with LTC Gross. We received instructions to attack at 0730 hours. The map graphics were brief and no real detail was provided on the enemy situation. I failed to report the missing HEMMTs. I still was not aware of the extent of the problem. It was 0715 hours as I re-mounted my tank. I gave orders over the radio as I moved back to the front lines and the battalion.

As I drove through the area, A Co was still refueling. I began moving with the battalion formation non-stop as I approached from the rear. The time was 0730 hours. Daylight was breaking. The fog was still with us. Commanders were plotting their maps and punching in their GPS devices as they were moving. There were destroyed vehicles and bodies everywhere.

Our new mission was to pass through 1st Bde, LD at 0900 hours and continue the attack on the Republican Guard units to our front.

CHAPTER 11

G-DAY + 3 DAYS

27 FEBRUARY 1991

Continuing the Attack

A Co stopped refueling on the spot and started moving as part of the formation. We clearly identified TF 3-37 on our right flank. I instructed the lead companies, C and B Cos, to guide on TF 3-37. They had the inside track and would make a large turning movement to the southeast. A and D Cos would trail and complete the box formation. We had to travel about fifteen to twenty kilometers to get to the LD being marked by the presence of the 1st Bde. We were to make a forward passage of lines with them.

As we progressed, we passed through burning vehicles, bunkers, and dead bodies. The burning vehicles caused secondary explosions and, because of this, we avoided getting too close to them.

I remember one dead Iraqi soldier on the ground. A bullet had caved in his head and it looked like a deflated balloon on the ground. I mention this only to amplify the psychological impact on our soldiers with regard to the ugly side of the war.



Destroyed Iraqi vehicles burning from the night's fighting. Many vehicles were re-engaged to ensure they were not playing dead.

Wrong Direction

We moved forward at an ever-increasing pace. The battalion was on the outside of the turn. We had the sensation of playing "crack the whip" on an ice rink. The more TF 3-37 turned to the south, the faster we had to travel to keep up and maintain the formation. After six to eight kilometers, I sensed we were making too hard a right turn. I began to notice my GPS was confirming my worst fears. I jumped up and down in the turret to look at my GPS. I called LTC Gross on the brigade net and tactfully suggested he was heading too far south. He insisted they had a good fix. I began doubting my GPS. I re-indexed the data in an attempt to confirm my correct location. I called the company commanders for readings from their GPS devices. I could not confirm my location even with their help. We were moving so fast we were losing control of the formation. Eventually, I broke off from TF 3-37 and halted the battalion.

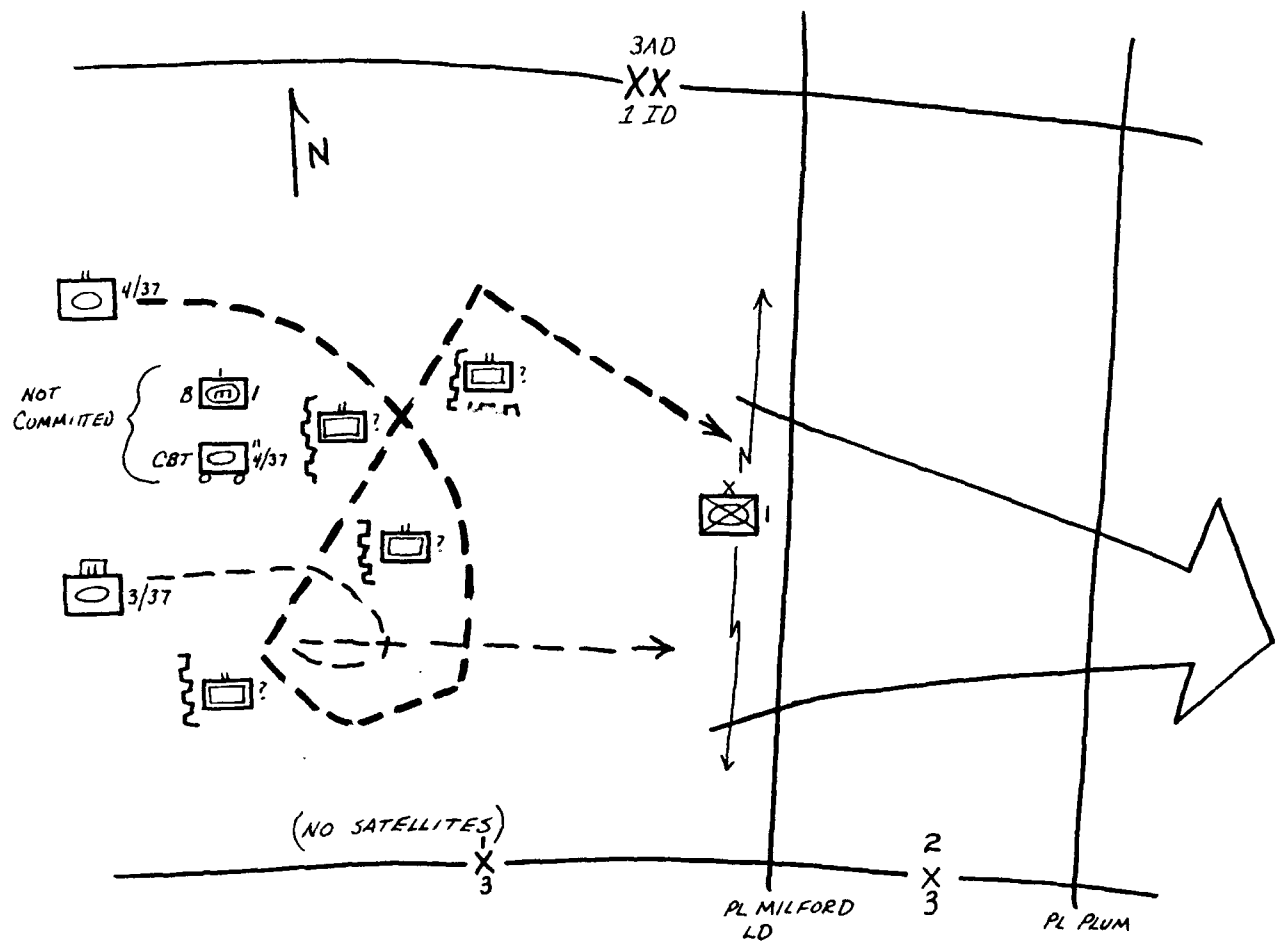


Diagram #32. Confusion in the Attack.

We almost made a complete circle through one Iraqi Army brigade position. As we moved, we continued to destroy vehicles, mostly with thermite grenades. We made note of the piles of ammunition and EPWs in the area waiting to be policed up.

I had all the commanders punch in their GPSs and give me their locations. I did the same. We had made two-thirds of a complete circle and had no visual contact with TF 3-37. They were on the inside of the track. I envisioned they had made a complete circle and then reset their course for the LD. In addition to being disoriented, we wasted precious fuel.

COL Moreno moved his Command Group to the LD and was asking where we were. He called LTC Gross to find out where he was. While he was busy speaking to LTC Gross, I set a new course for the battalion. I called CPT Martin and asked if he had located a satellite. I passed him a grid location to the northeast to get us back on track. He took the lead with his company and the rest of the battalion fell into the formation.

Statement by CPT Martin, B Co Commander, describing his company's actions in the attack on 27 February 1991:

At 0730 hours on 27 February, we had orders to LD and move out to pass through a forward element. Both C Co and B Co were to lead a battalion box formation and stay linked with TF 3-37 on our right flank. As we moved out, it was quite easy to maintain contact with TF 3-37 because we were traveling at a slow speed. TF 3-37 was to be the brigade guide for all movement.

Initially, we passed through several enemy positions occupied by tanks and APCs in perfect condition. Battalion did not allow us to destroy them

with our main guns as there were friendly units to our front.

We simply continued to march, on line, trying to maintain contact with TF 3-37. Unfortunately, TF 3-37 kept turning right, in bold direction changes, eventually resulting in the formation turning one hundred eighty degrees and marching in the wrong direction.

Next, LTC Marlin ordered my company to lead the battalion south to a passage point. Time was of the essence and we had to race our tanks to the passage. For the sake of time, I took the lead in the company, programmed the grid location into the GPS on the move, and set my speed at twenty-five MPH.

Shortly thereafter, 3rd Plt ran into a bombed ammunition complex with unexploded ordinance all over the place. Two of 3rd Plt's tanks set off some of the ordinance--minor damage. LTC Marlin was right behind my tank asking me to speed up! I told him the ordinance was posing a small problem for us. No snivelling was the response.

I kicked the speed up to thirty MPH, kept it there for twenty minutes or so, and looked to the rear. To my amazement, the majority of the battalion formation was still intact behind me.

We finally hit the passage point and went on line once again trying to maintain contact with TF 3-37. It seemed like a never-ending battle to maintain contact because TF 3-37 would vary the direction of their formation every two kilometers or so. We pressed on and met our objective at about 1200 hours. En route, we shot several bunkers and tanks and captured a few EPWs who we discovered and sent to our rear.

At our objective (actually a stop for fuel), we waited for the lost fuel HEMMTs and prepared for another move to Objective 1. We marched at 1400 hours and ran into some mining areas where we had to move forward in battalion column. Once we broke out of the rough terrain, we established a battalion formation.

An order came over the net to continue to a lager site. En route, we encountered two Iraqis who decided they wanted to stay in their fighting positions. Our machine guns convinced them they should surrender. We took and destroyed their weapons (B34) and pressed on. For the next several hours, we drove toward the lager

and waited for several changes of mission. We finally settled down on line as part of a battalion "horseshoe" and prepared for the mission of moving to Objective 1.

Statement by CPT Torrence, C Co Commander, describing his attack of 27 February 1991:

On the morning of 27 February 1991, the company had two to three desperately needed hours of sleep. Around 0600 hours, we were told to SP at 0830 hours. It changed to 0730 hours. We departed with thirteen tanks in a company line formation with platoons in column. C22's starter went out and we informed the ALOC, who said they would police it up. (They never did, and the crew sat in place for five days.)

As we hit the SP, we saw one, then two, then numerous enemy vehicles. We were not allowed to shoot or destroy them with main guns because the battalion was afraid of fratricide. I finally let the crew of C31 destroy a T72 tank because these were going to pass directly in its line of fire.

After five kilometers of eastward movement, we started to turn south. The XO made numerous calls on the battalion net to get the formation to turn back. Finally, after doing a one hundred eighty degree maneuver through a division-size defense, we cut away from TF 3-37 and began to move at high speed to the passage point.

During the "doughnut," C31 threw a track and the 1SG, with the maintenance team, went out in search of additional track. While in place, C31 destroyed three T55s, seven BMPs, and several trucks.

The move to the passage point was uneventful except for the thirty MPH plus speed with the tanks moving through difficult terrain. Finally, we linked up at the passage point and moved to the front of the division's formation. We then moved into a battalion wedge formation of A, C, and B Cos. We moved another twenty or so kilometers to the east. We refueled after a one-hour stop. C65 and C12 had run out of fuel, and C34 had thrown a track. We got C12 and C65 topped off. C31, with 1SG Macasio, caught up by the time we moved again.

As we pulled out of the refuel site, we engaged three T55s in keyhole positions. We were chastised

for engaging because of the proximity of TF 3-37 on the other side of the twenty foot berm.

After moving through an enormous mining site with thirty foot drop-off points and numerous berms and holes, we emerged onto flat ground. We saw twenty to thirty burning vehicles to the north and east. We moved to and through these vehicles, destroying another four or five T59 tanks and numerous trucks. During this engagement (at dusk), we received fire from a sniper team who quickly abandoned its hole after being engaged by machine gun fire. They bounced from tank to tank trying to surrender, but we could not stop, so we waved them back to the west.

At night we stopped in formation and waited for further instructions. Finally, around 0200 hours, we were ordered to move to an AA five kilometers to the southwest. One-half of the company moved to get fuel from the battalion fuel point. The fuelers were not at the reported site and the XO and 1SG wandered around trying to find some fuel. During their movements, 1SG's APC hit a bomb crater and needed to be recovered. The XO ran out of fuel. (His fuel pumps were out and could not be replaced due to the total lack of any Class IX parts.) I led the rest of the company to the new AA and arrived around 0230 hours. The 1SG was successful in getting an additional two fuel HEMMTs and refueled the company around 0400-0500 hours.

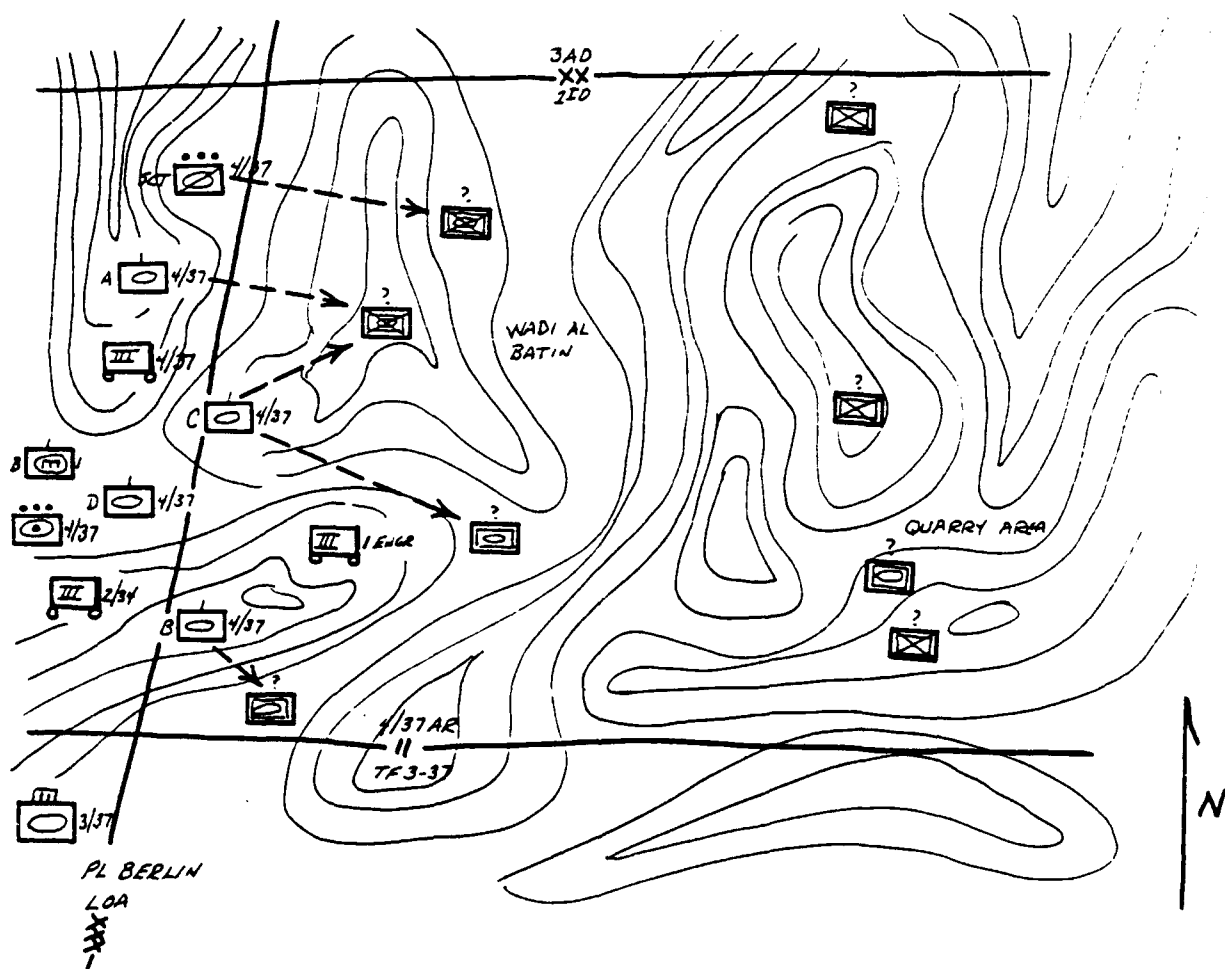


Diagram #33. Attacking Through the Quarry.

Eventually, I heard from COL Moreno. We were behind schedule and not anywhere in sight of the LD. COL Moreno was upset. He wanted to know where I was. I hesitated because I was not sure. We learned later a major contributing factor was the lack of satellite availability between the hours of 0700 and 0900 hours. This caused us to receive incorrect readings on our GPSs and caused some of the confusion. It also highlighted our reliance on the GPS for navigation and command and control. The grid location I gave CPT Martin to the northeast was a random grid. I had to get the formation back together and get us out of the area. The grid was too far to the northeast.

I changed our direction again and we headed for the LD. We were easily thirty minutes behind schedule. For this LD, we should have been thirty minutes early. I kept pushing the battalion to go faster. TF 3-37 finally reached the LD and COL Moreno's comments were solely directed at us. We were traveling about thirty to thirty-five MPH. I can still remember tanks with plows almost flying through the air as they hit small berms and rough spots on the terrain.

We traveled into the Wadi Al Batin area. Only during the last ten kilometers was I assured we had good GPS readings and were back on track. We were going so fast we ran right into TF 3-37 waiting for us on the LD. COL Moreno adjusted our LD with division and we just made it. The time was 0930 hours.

Statement by LT Ward, the Scout Plt Leader, describing his platoon's actions in the attack on 27 February 1991:

On the morning of 27 February, the crews awoke to a world of destruction. Destroyed Iraqi vehicles were everywhere. We did not have long to recover from the night before word came down for movement at 0700 hours.

I received instructions to remain on my left flank screen mission. We moved out with A Co on our right and found ourselves moving through an area of mass destruction. Even more appalling was many of the Iraqi armored vehicles appeared untouched. We kept reporting the vehicles up but never received permission to fire due to 1st Bde being to our front.

On the movement through, SSG Hart spotted a vehicle with a dismounting soldier jumping out of the cab with an AK47. Seeing the troop with the weapon, SSG Hart made the decision to kill the soldier before the unprotected rear trains passed.

We continued movement on the brigade's circle exercise (or rather the "deception" plan), and finally passed through 1st Bde. After passing through, we were told no friendly units should be in our area and we were in a "free fire" zone. About ten kilometers from us, I spotted "enemy" vehicles to our north. I called them in and received confirmation there were no friendlies in the area. While preparing to engage, the platoon noticed the vehicles were, in fact, a friendly artillery unit. I was thankful we did not engage them.

We continued the movement on the flank through the wadi and stopped to take weapons from approximately ten prisoners. We finally made it through the wadi and made a stop for fuel. After approximately one hour, the fuel arrived and the platoon was sent to the west of the battalion.

We went approximately ten kilometers through a quarry area when sabot rounds started flying around us. We found out later C Co fired upon several tanks. LTC Marlin put an immediate stop to the firing and instructed us to hold in place until the battalion caught up with us. We continued to move on the battalion's left flank through the quarry. After the battalion caught up with us, we moved through many EPWs and destroyed vehicles and finally stopped for the evening.

The platoon was instructed to set up an AA, refuel, and prepare to move to Objective 1. We executed these missions and got some people the first bit of rest they had received in four days.

Entering the Wadi Al Batin

We passed through the 1st Bde. Now everything to our front was the enemy. We slowed to five MPH and regained control of all of our formations, and I acquired the status of the rest of the vehicles in the battalion. Apparently, the semi-circle only affected the tank companies. We were moving so fast the TOC and combat trains could not keep up anyway. They had not fallen behind at all. We picked them up as we passed back through the second time around. Just as I re-emphasized the ROE for targets to our front, the 1st Bde TOC group, led by CSM Milling, passed perpendicular to our entire front in column, moving to the south.

The terrain changed from perfectly flat to rolling hills and large dunes. Visibility along the terrain ranged from five hundred meters to three thousand meters. However, the worst effect was on the formation because of the visibility laterally. I kept the Scout Plt on the left flank and we continued to move abreast of TF 3-37 through the broken terrain. A few suspected targets were engaged as we moved through the area. I kept the Command Group behind B Co so I could keep an eye on TF 3-37 at the same time.

Critical Fuel Situation

We traveled about sixty kilometers when we hit a very rough area of terrain. The area was heavily bunkered and resembled a quarry. Dirt and sand mounds were everywhere and it was extremely difficult to control the battalion's movement. LT Wiser's Tank Platoon destroyed several tanks in this area. I lost visual contact with three of the tank companies and moved too far forward. I doubled back to join them. The time was 1300 hours. We were almost out of fuel. As I came around a bend and linked up with A and C Cos, I saw most of the 1st Bde in addition to TF 3-37 to the south. The entire area was saturated with berms, dikes, and rolling terrain. The area had been bombed and this contributed to the difficulty of maneuvering through the terrain. I reported my fuel situation to COL Moreno. He managed to scrounge fuel from other units.

Statement by CPT Clidas, the HHC Co Commander, describing his efforts and the efforts of other key leaders attempting to get fuel to the battalion on 27 February 1991:

At approximately 0700 hours on 27 February, the BSA began to move forward again. As the SP approached, it became more obvious to us the thirteen fuelers from the Support Plt never linked up with the battalion. Up until 0600 hours, we assumed they were merely late, or at the wrong location. All attempts to raise the LT Thompson leader on the administrative and logistics or command net were futile. As we began to road march forward, we searched both left and right of the route for any sign of the missing fuelers.

We arrived at the new BSA site at approximately 1100 hours. This new site was approximately thirty miles behind the lead elements of the rapidly advancing brigade. By this point, the battalion field trains consisted of the Mess Section, the Headquarters

Maintenance Section, the company supply sections, and the S1/S4 Sections.

Upon arrival at the new location, we linked up with the CPT Hall. He had brought back four empty fuelers. He confirmed LT Thompson was still missing and he would continue searching for him. I would get the four fuelers filled when 201st Fwd Spt Bn had the ability to do so. Then I would take the fuelers forward to link-up with the battalion, which was critically short of fuel. CPT Hall then went forward.

At approximately 1300 hours, the fuelers were topped off by 201st Fwd Spt Bn. Before my planned move with the now full fuelers, MAJ Brown, the 201st Fwd Spt Bn XO, told me to hold in place. He said LTC Schenk, had decided to consolidate all of the brigade's fuel assets into one convoy. I tried to get these instructions changed through the senior officer present at the brigade ALOC, CPT Roberts. Even though I had no approval from brigade, I attempted to move the fuelers to the battalion. I was stopped by MAJ Brown.

The brigade convoy departed at approximately 1400 hours. I went with the convoy, hoping at some point to be able to regain control of our fuelers, or at least spot the lost thirteen fuelers. I brought LT Ortega with me. Assuming the worst had happened to LT Thompson and some (or all) of his convoy, I intended to put LT Ortega in charge of what remained of the battalion's fuel assets.

The convoy took approximately four hours to catch up with trail elements of the brigade. En route, we continued to search for LT Thompson, but to no avail. We passed hundreds of bypassed Iraqi soldiers. Most were without weapons, however, some remained armed. Those who were armed made no hostile move toward the convoy as we directed them southwest. At one point, we passed a lone Iraqi soldier who was wandering aimlessly. There were no other soldiers in the area. As we passed him, he appeared weak and without any water or rations. He could barely walk. We felt sure if we left him, he would die. We took him prisoner, and he was eventually returned to 201st Fwd Spt Bn.

We linked up with LTC Schenk at 1730 hours. We convinced him to release our four fuelers (TF 3-37 also required control of theirs). At this point, we also linked up with CPT Hall. We went forward with him to top off vehicles from the four fuelers. We finally linked up with the battalion at approximately

1930 hours. We still had not regained contact with LT Thompson.

The BSA jumped again at approximately 1500 hours. The field trains were now under the command of 1SG Thiede since LT Ortega and I were forward with the battalion TOC. We spent the night at the battalion CP.

Statement by CPT Hall, the Battalion S4, describing his actions attempting to find fuel for the battalion on 27 February 1901:

About 0730 hours on 27 February, I left the battalion in search of fuel. I took the four empty HEMMTs from the ALOC and started on my forty to fifty mile march back through the desert to link-up with the BSA. As I worked my way back, I passed countless enemy vehicles and numerous EPWs wanting me to take them. I did not have the time nor the capability. I ran into CSM Stockton. He was in the process of rounding up EPWs and I told him where some more were located.

Once I reached the BSA, I was informed there were no five thousand gallon tankers available. They would arrive around 1200 hours. Time being critical, I waited until 1300 hours and the five thousand gallon tankers had still not arrived. I left the HEMMTs and went forward in search of the battalion which was moving forward. I received a call CPT Clidas. He had four full HEMMTs at the brigade Logistics Release Point (LRP). I told him I would meet him there and take the fuel forward.

About 1500 hours, I linked up with CPT Clidas and started forward to the battalion when I got a call from A Co's 1SG. He had seen T55 tanks and fifty enemy dismounts located along my route. I worked my way through the wadi, staying in the low ground out of sight, until I saw an artillery battalion headed north. I fell in with the artillery battalion for protection and the fifty enemy dismounts surrendered as we drove up to them. I linked up with the battalion just before dark and topped them off. Just another fun day.



T55 tank destroyed by LT Wiser's platoon in the Wadi Al Batin. Thermite grenades were used on abandoned tanks to save ammunition and to reduce the chance of fratricide.

We still had not found our missing thirteen fuel HEMMTs. I had all but given them up as lost. As COL Moreno located fuel trucks from adjacent units, I dispatched a guide to link-up with the trucks and guide them to us. I sent CPT Loche to the 1st Engr Bn to get trucks; and LT Powers to 4th Bn, 5th FA, for fuelers. They brought the trucks back to us. We ran a gas station refuel with each vehicle rationed to one hundred gallons. It was a hectic, pressured situation. We were able to meet our next start time of 1400 hours by the skin of our teeth.

I was embarrassed over the fuel situation. We brought one fuel truck with us in the trains for an emergency refuel.

Statement by LT Powers, the Mortar Plt Leader, describing his attempts to assist in getting fuel for the battalion on 27 February 1991:

On 27 February at approximately 1300 hours, LTC Marlin, Thunder Six, instructed me to take my platoon to COL Moreno's location and fuel my platoon up. We had to LD at 1400 hours. I gathered my platoon on the move and linked up with a 4th Bn, 5th FA fueler. I received the mission at 1300 hours and was fueling by 1305 hours. The link-up point was two kilometers away. I fueled up my platoon and was instructed to escort the fueler with remaining fuel back to the battalion. It had about twenty-two hundred gallons left.

I left COL Moreno, Dagger Six, and was on my way back when Thunder Six told me to go back to Dagger Six's location and pick up two more fuelers for the attack. I told my Platoon Sergeant, SFC Hill, to line the platoon up at the fuel point and drop the 4th Bn, 5th FA fueler off. Then I got back in my HMMWV and went back to COL Moreno's location to pick up two more fuelers and a five-ton truck from the 1st Engr Bn. I linked up with LTC Hawkins (1st Engr, Battalion Command), picked up the fuelers, and headed back to the battalion. I arrived just in time to jump back in my mortar carrier and give the fuelers to CPT Loche. This was one of the most intense hours of the attack.



Critical refuel done in the Wadi Al Batin area. Tanks are from B Co. Notice all the soldiers are still in MOPP 3 attire. LTC Marlin's tank is in far background. HEMMT not painted sand color indicates they are borrowed from another unit.

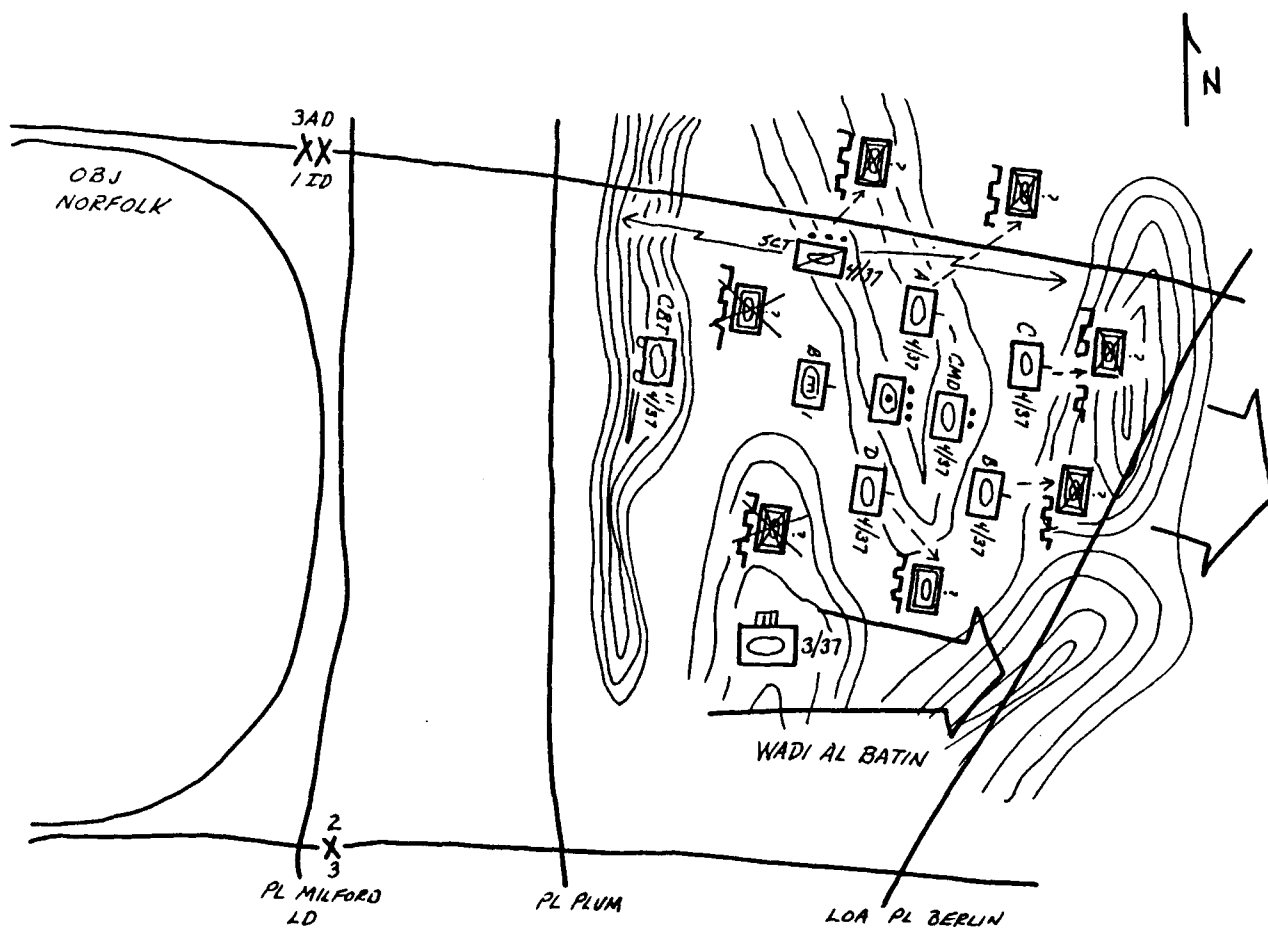


Diagram #34. Refueling at the Wadi Al Batin.

Attacking to Objective 1

At 1400 hours, we continued the attack. We moved out in a column formation. It was the only way we could get out of the area. As we filed out, we tried to get back into a box formation. C Co opened up on about three T55 tanks to our south at close range (four hundred meters). TF 3-37 complained on the radio about fires cutting across their front. At first I thought it was from us, but discovered it was from TF 2-34 to their south. The terrain forced us to the south and I had no visual contact with TF 3-37.

COL Moreno became concerned as it became dark about 1530 hours. He instructed me to head north, if I could, and set us back on course. TF 3-37 would have to catch up. I set a new course sending us through a very rough piece of terrain. The hills rose as high as one hundred feet and we were channelized. I took the lead after we hit a dead end. I led the battalion out of the area and back on to flat terrain as darkness fell.

The Mortar Plt and combat trains had a difficult time keeping up with the battalion. The combination of darkness and terrain made trafficability slow. LT Powers' M113 APC dropped into a large crater attempting to keep up the pace. The crew was badly shaken up and a pair of night vision goggles was lost. A three-quarter ton trailer, with a generator, broke free of the towing vehicle and was a true combat loss. Numerous crew members and wheel vehicle personnel received rough rides and lost equipment keeping the pace of the attack. There was no

doubt in any soldier's mind about having the Iraqis right where we wanted them. We were determined to keep up the pressure.



T55 tank destroyed by C Co in the berm and quarry area of the Wadi Al Batin.



T54 tank destroyed by C Co at close range. Notice the berms and dirt barriers throughout the area. Destroyed tank is having secondary explosions.

The battalion trains were at the end of the column. SSG William J McCormick III's tank had lost all turret power and was traveling with the battalion trains. During hours of darkness, the trains were engaged by a bypassed T55 tank concealed in the berm area. SSG McCormick destroyed the tank with the help of 1SG Thiede. Without his help, the trains would have been at the mercy of the enemy tank.

Statement by SSG McCormick, the A12 Tank Commander, describing his defense of the combat trains the night of 27 February 1991:

On February 27, 1991, our tank, A12, departed our battalion's area and linked up with LT Thompson's combat trains for the road march to re-join A Co. Around 1100 hours, we came upon a couple of destroyed BMPs. We were still in Iraq. I then ran into SFC McCurnin and SGT Danny G. Richards, the NCOIC of EPWs and his driver. I asked SFC McCurnin if this area was clear of the enemy and he told me about two Republican Guard soldiers and a lot of EPWs captured here this morning. So, I took it that the area was not clear and informed the crew.

I talked to the crew members of two ADA Vulcan tracks from 3rd Bn, 2nd ADA, B32 and B33, and let them know where I would be located. I then proceeded to stay close, within two hundred meters, and was looking for targets. Included in our column was the battalion BSA convoy, D13 crew and D34, and two BFVs from 1st Sqdn, 4th Cav.

Around 1900 hours, we were looking at a still serviceable enemy APC and moved toward it to investigate. Upon coming around the right of the APC, we spotted a large group of Iraqi soldiers running into their trenches. We then departed the area and linked back up with D13 and returned. We captured twenty-two EPWs, put them in a column, and marched them to a road intersection guarded by an M88 recovery vehicle from 201st Fwd Spt Bn. I talked to the company commander. He said we had to take care of them because he had no transportation. We then started searching the EPWs and a platoon of MPs pulled up. We turned over the EPWs and confiscated their equipment from them.

Just prior to departing, we saw and then heard a Vulcan open fire from the direction of the convoy. I called them on the radio to get a Situation Report (SITREP) from them. They said they identified dismounts in the area and one of the BFVs identified a T72 tank.

A12 and D13 raced up to the convoy and on the way I found out D13 had not bore-sighted before he departed in the morning. Both tanks battle carried sabot (M833). I instructed D13 to take the right side of the column and I would go to the left. About halfway to the column, the BFV reported he fired a TOW at a T72 and destroyed it.

After passing the BSA part of the column, my gunner said he identified a moving T54/55 tank. I tried to get one of the BFVs to verify the target. He could not identify the target. I next went to the ADA Vulcans and asked if B33 could see the target. He could see it, but could not verify it. A minute or two later, my gunner, SGT Otis Harris, Jr., informed me the enemy tank fired and the turret was moving in the convoy's direction. I called B33 to cover my move away from the convoy and toward the tank. I called the BFV and told him to get the convoy moving. He said they could not move. The lead element's Magellan GPS was screwed up waiting for an update. We fired at a range of thirteen hundred thirty meters and the splash [small hit] was noted by my gunner, my driver through his VVS-2 [driver's night sight], and myself. We scanned the area for about a minute and determined the target was killed. No other targets were in sight during this period of time. We could only identify destroyed T54/55 tanks, BMPs, BRDMS, and a lot of trucks.

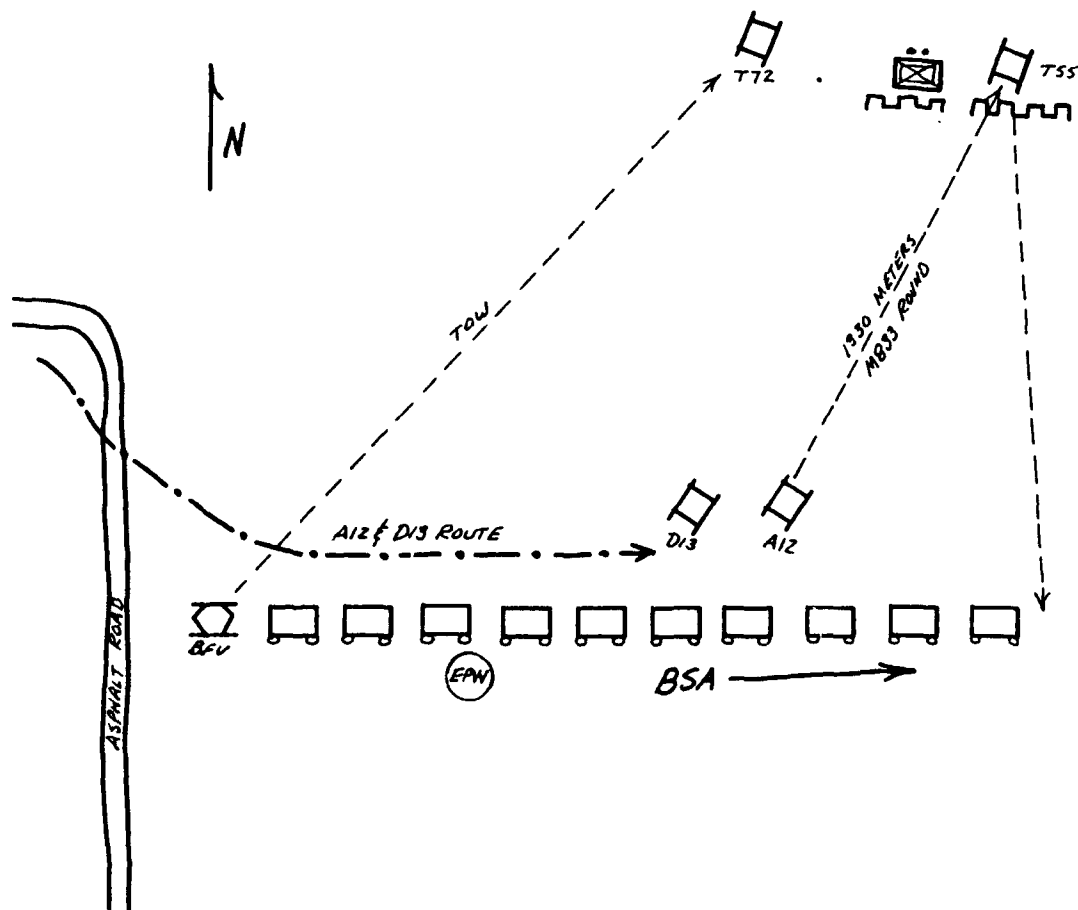


Diagram #35. T55 Tank Threatens the Combat Trains.

It took a while for everyone to file out of the quarry-type area. We regained the formation and moved toward Objective 1. We were all alone. TF 3-37 was not in sight. From the conversations on the radio, they were to our rear and southerly. There were about four burning armored vehicles to our front. The area was flat and open. I was relieved to be out of the bermed, quarry-type terrain before nightfall.

A column of British vehicles passed perpendicular to our front and caused confusion. We almost engaged, but held our fire until we properly identified them. They were in the wrong place at the wrong time and almost paid a serious price.

We started moving out in a box formation. C and B Cos went on line. About five kilometers later, a machine gun opened up on the lead tanks. About six of our tanks responded simultaneously with machine gun fire. The two Iraqi soldiers surrendered. We were tired, but the multiple machine gun fire response certainly quelled any thoughts of anyone not being on guard, alert and ready.

COL Moreno called and told me to halt. We were to lager for the night and provide protection for two artillery battalions to our rear.



The battalion filing out of the quarry-type area, led by LTC Marlin's tank, onto the flatter terrain.



The scene looking northeast after the battalion cleared the quarry area. Notice the haze in the sky. Burning vehicle was one of many in the area.

If there was a moon, it was blocked out by the oil fires' smog. I halted the battalion and drove my tank the three kilometers to the south to link-up with the two artillery battalions. I drove to their TOC site and spoke with the operations officer. I was the first one to arrive, so I diagrammed a perimeter for our battalion and TF 3-37. I informed them I would set up accordingly and they should pass on the information to TF 3-37 when they arrived. I called on the radio the center of mass grid locations and weapon orientation for each of our commanders. I still had fifty operational tanks

at this point--operational in the sense they could fight, but not operational according to operator manual's standards.

When I returned to the battalion, I found MAJ Garrity at the TOC. He informed me COL Moreno wanted me back at the artillery battalion TOC. I told everyone to hold in place and headed back for the artillery location. It was so dark, my driver drove into a deep pit. We dropped nose-down about five to six feet and hit hard. It shook all the crew up. We climbed out and continued.

At COL Moreno's location, he informed me the 1st Sqdn, 4th Cav, had cut the main north-south highway from Kuwait to Basra. He said, "We gotta go save Bobby!" He was referring to LTC Wilson. LTC Wilson, LTC Gross, and I had all served together from 1985 to 1988 in the 1st Ar Div in Germany. We were good friends. I understood the situation. LTC Wilson was on Objective 1, a built-up area, and was up to his neck in alligators. He had cut the main road for retreating Iraqis heading north. We were about twenty to thirty kilometers from Objective 1.

I received my orders and headed back to the battalion. En route, the orders were changed. We were instructed to halt for the night. I issued the orders over the radio to my company commanders. I changed my tank's direction and went to our lager position. I told the TOC and Command Group to link-up with me there. All the companies moved to their designated locations and reported set.

At 0100 hours, I tried to lie down for some sleep. MAJ Garrity stayed awake and was monitoring the division radio net. A fog rolled in and there was no visible moon. At about 0330 hours, MAJ Garrity woke me to inform me the division was issuing movement orders to our brigade. We issued a WARNO to all the companies to be ready to move.

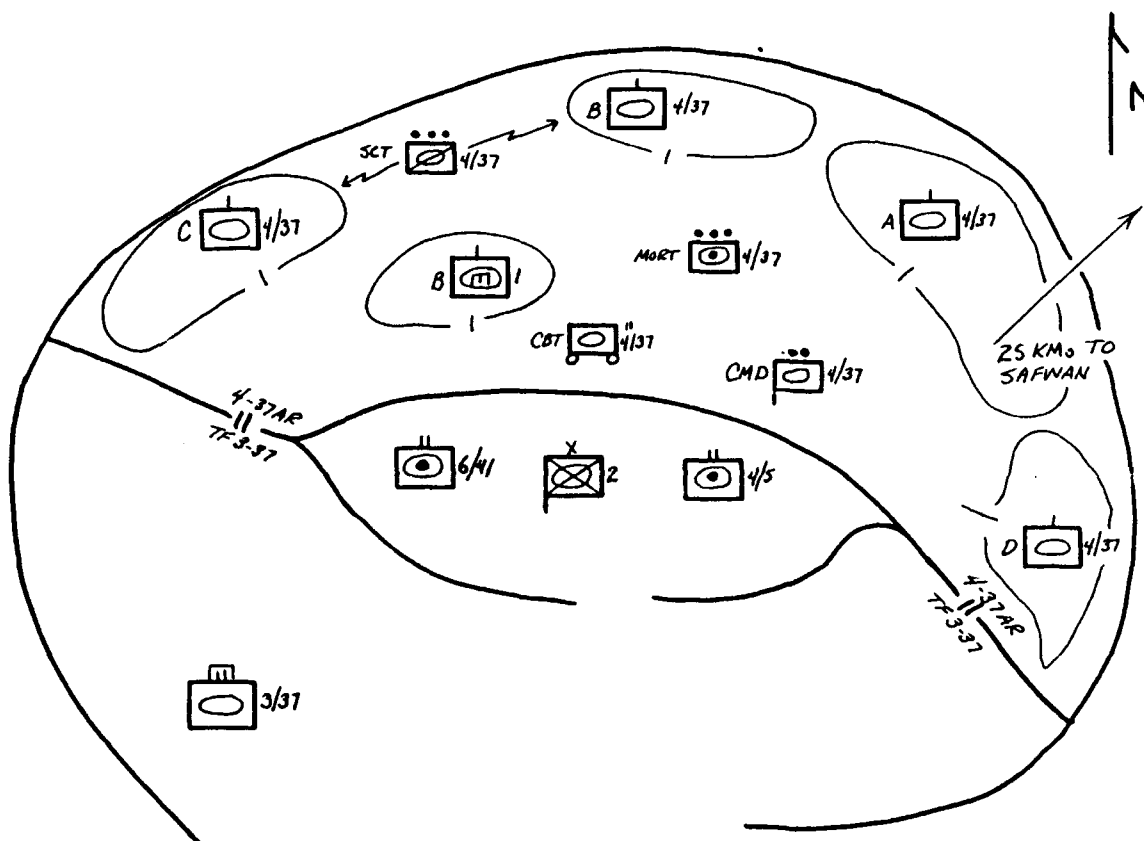


Diagram #36. The Battalion's Night Lager.

CHAPTER 12

SEIZURE OF SAFWAN

28 FEBRUARY 1991 - 2 MARCH 1991

Seize Objective 1

We continued to monitor the radio. MAJ Garrity was one step ahead of brigade all the way. He progressively brought all the units to REDCON 1. By the time brigade told us to move, we were moving. When COL Moreno called the first time on the radio, he challenged our REDCON 1 status. I assured him it was a correct report. By 0600 hours, we were moving toward Objective 1. The sky was dark and a thick fog settled on the ground. Visibility was less than fifty meters.

We moved very slowly, picking up our companies as we moved. Once everyone was accounted for, we began to pick up the pace. We fell behind TF 3-37, but had no visual contact with them because of the fog. The brigade Command Group was ahead of both battalion. We traveled in a box formation with C and A Cos leading, followed by B and D Cos. The Scout Plt stayed on the left flank of the formation.

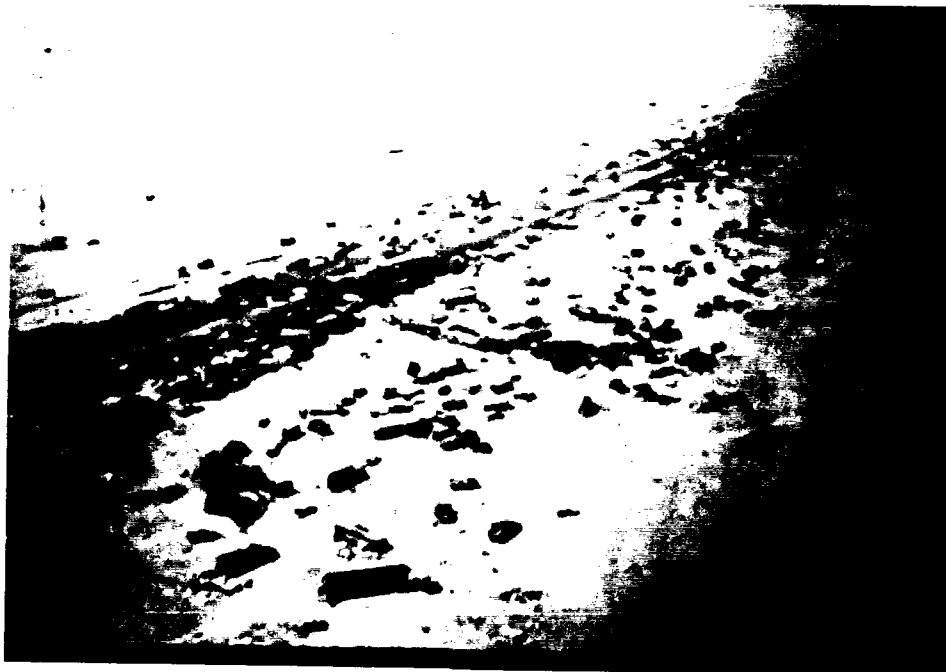
The fog slowed our movement. We could not see anything. At one point, we crossed a black asphalt road and it startled everyone. It was the first sign of civilization we had seen in over a month.



Photo of the area leading into Objective 1.



Burning oil wells on the approach to
Objective 1.



Aerial photo of Objective 1.

All of a sudden, we passed through a series of empty dug-in positions and saw the main road. We sighted power lines. Hundreds of burned-out and destroyed vehicles littered the road. Dead bodies were everywhere. Burning combat vehicles were causing secondary explosions.

COL Moreno called on the radio to inform me a cease fire was in effect as of 0800 hours. The time was 0730 hours.

We moved into a perimeter defense on Objective 1. I sent MAJ Cook to link-up with 1st Sqdn, 4th Cav. We formed a semi-circle around Objective 1 and tied in with the 1st Sqdn, 4th

Cav, and TF 3-37. From west to east, I had A, B, C, and D Cos defending.

Statement by CPT Torrence, the C Co Commander, describing his company's attack to Objective 1 on 28 February 1991:

As we moved out on the morning of 28 February, we were in reasonably good shape. The company was down to twelve tanks, but we were refueled and began the movement without a hitch. C Co and A Co led the battalion box formation. The fog limited visibility to about two hundred meters. The movement forward was a smooth one. We knew it was supposed to be a short move and I was told the cease fire was to begin at 0800 hours.

We used a company radio net because of a lack of radios. (The whole radio repair system was an abortion. We did not receive one repaired radio during the five-month stay in theater.) Because of the lack of secure systems, I informed my company of the cease fire in code. The code "Miller time" raised morale and we had a clearly-defined objective (our first since the breach).

The mark of civilization, a high power line across the highway, was an incredible sight after two months in the desolate desert. When we hit the road, all hell broke loose. We had, because of the limited visibility, stumbled into three to five hundred sleeping Iraqi soldiers who were moving north. The company formed, or broke into, small groups, disarming and destroying vehicles. The plan was to hit the road and wheel north. Because of the congestion, the movement was splintered and we took almost two hours to consolidate. Most of the tanks, to include mine, had to dismount two tank crewman to disarm the enemy soldiers who were very confused. All of the tanks ended up with large piles of small caliber weapons on top of the tank turrets. My tank finally turned north after passing thirty or forty EPWs on to my HMMWV driver.

As we started north, I began to fully comprehend the mass of death and destruction. There were bodies and burned vehicles everywhere. Finally, we consolidated about one and one-half kilometers north of the crossing. I notified the company of the cease fire. Everyone breathed a collective sigh of relief. On the battalion net, I heard SFC Day, the 3rd Plt

Sergeant, call and say he was about twenty minutes out. He was left at the refuel site the day before, after throwing a track. All of my tanks, except for C22, had made it to the Objective. We were all tired and dirty. We had not had a hot meal in seven days (and would not receive one for another week), but everyone was alive.

We began to clear our position of all enemy vehicles and EPWs. We found numerous large caches of Jordanian ammunition. We buried the dead and finally slept.

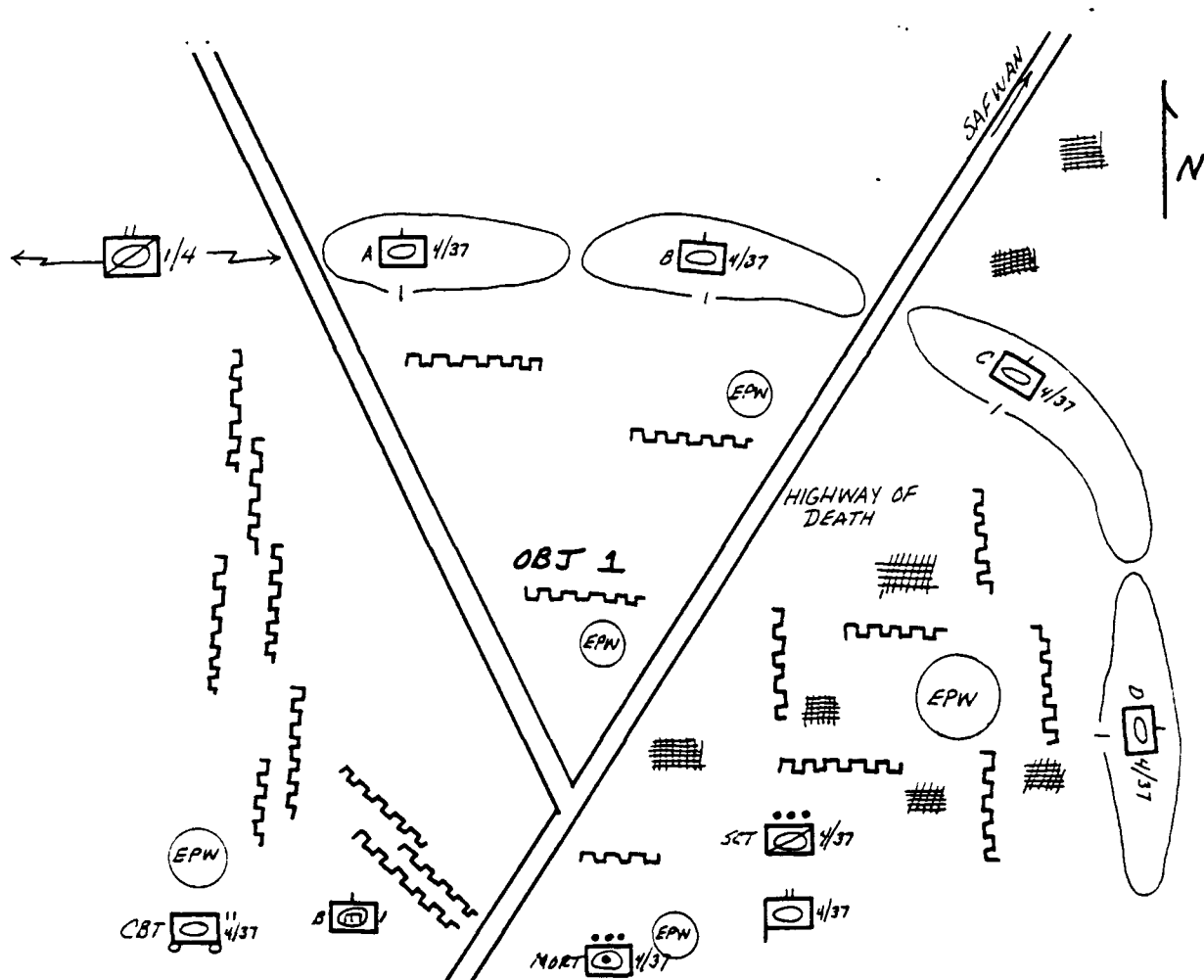


Diagram #38. Seizing Objective 1.



Destroyed tank en route to Objective 1.



Iraqi positions in the vicinity of Objective 1.



Destroyed T55 tank with two dead Iraqi soldiers.



Destroyed vehicles along the main road.

I informed all the commanders of the cease fire and stressed the cease fire ROE. This was a dicey affair, at best. EPWs were everywhere and we set about securing them. Several were in need of emergency medical care or water. They were a pathetic lot, except for the Iraqi major, who spit and shouted vulgarities at CPT Hall during his capture. We made the mistake of putting some Iraqi officers with their soldiers. The soldiers attacked and beat the officers. We stopped them and corrected the situation.



EPWs surrendering at Objective 1. The armored vehicle in the background was having secondary explosions.



EPWs surrendering at Objective 1. Destroyed enemy armored vehicles in the background. Notice the haze is still in the air.



EPWs on the road at Objective 1 attempting to surrender. There are dead bodies lying on the ground in the foreground. Notice the haze limiting visibility.



Burning vehicles and oil wells on Objective
1. Photo was taken from the west side.

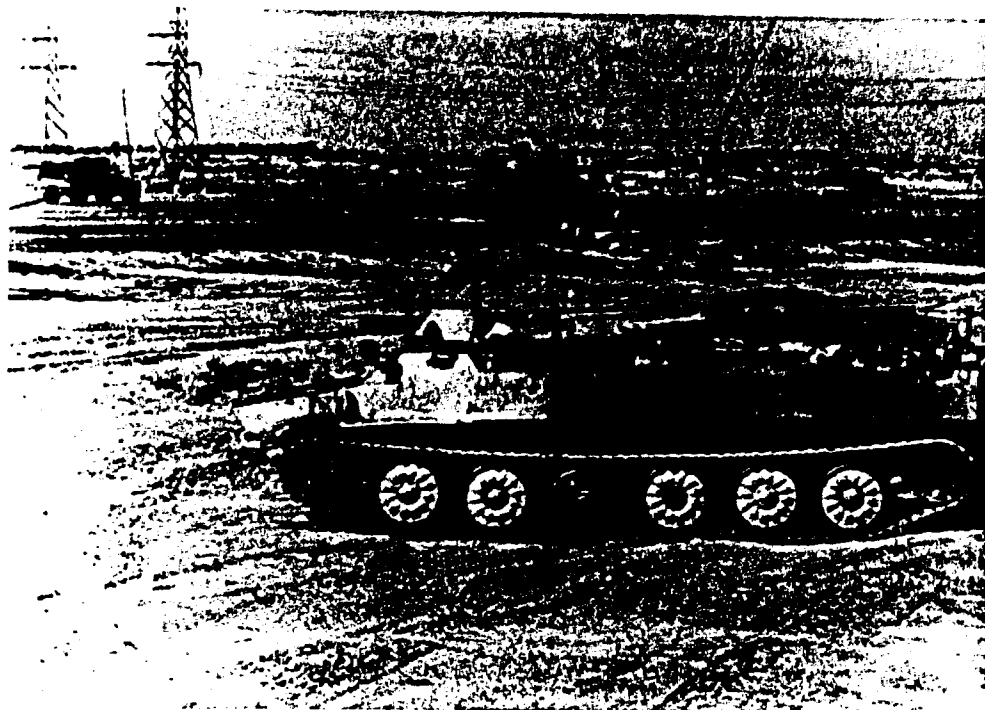
MAJ Cook made contact with the 1st Sqdn, 4th Cav, and ensured me we were tied in with their flank. After thirty minutes of getting the perimeter organized, I began looking for the TOC group. They were nowhere in sight. I called on the radio and discovered they had begun to set up outside the perimeter to the west of the road. I went to lead them in to the center of the perimeter.



SPC Goforth looking at junk along the road.
Not visible is the dead body in the back
seat of the car. A B Co tank is on the
horizon.



The first TOC site in Objective 1.



Destroyed vehicles adjacent to the TOC site.
Numerous dead Iraqi soldiers are less than
fifty meters from the site.

I located the TOC group and was going to guide them into position. My tank ran out of fuel eight hundred meters from the designated TOC site. I guided them the rest of the way with my HMMWV and then took fuel back to the tank. I had LT Ward and CPT Turner meet me at the TOC. I assigned them the mission of clearing all the bunkers and buildings in the area. The tank companies were already clearing most of their immediate area for local security. A significant amount of weapons and ammunition was discovered and detonated and burned in place. Some was discovered on the vehicles littering the highway. One truck found on the highway was full of mortar rounds. When it was

hit, the mortar rounds scattered all over the area. Unexploded munitions, DPICMs, and CBUs littered the area.



Destroyed vehicles along the road in Objective 1. Note the water pool to the right. Rain in this area tended to stagnate for long periods of time due to lack of drainage.

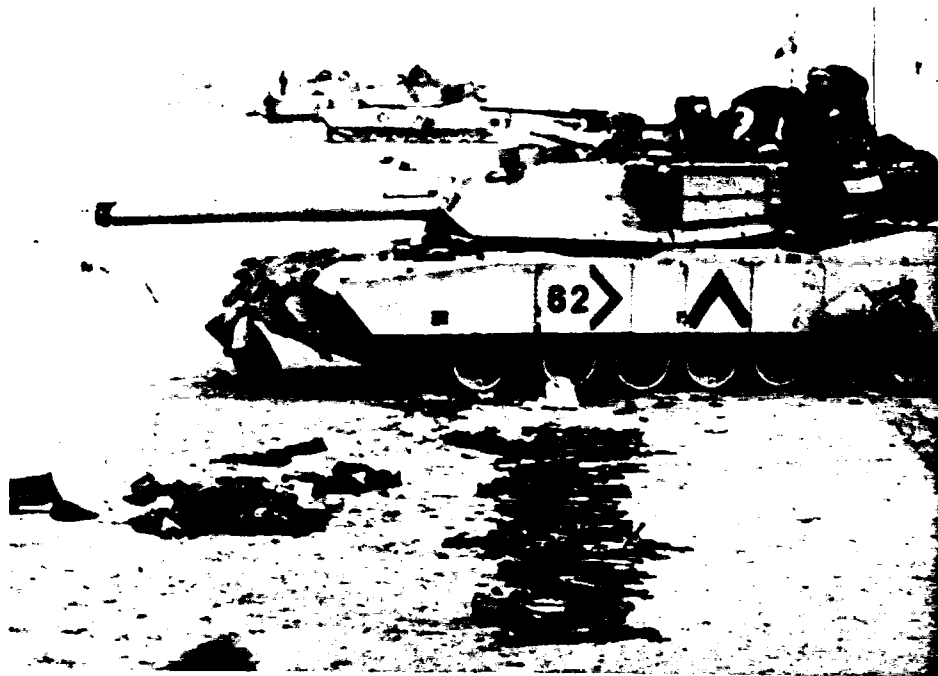


Photo of burned-out and destroyed tank on the main highway in Objective 1. Notice the road is a four-lane highway. This is the same road Iraq used to attack into Kuwait on 2 August 1990.

I met with COL Moreno at his TOC. We discussed a variety of subjects--from EPWs to cease fire to defense. I took notes. At this meeting, the announcement was made to go to MOPP 0. For the first time in five days, we removed our chemical protective gear. We all felt ten pounds lighter. The charcoal penetrated our uniforms all the way through to our underwear and gave our faces and hands a blackish complexion. Sweat caused streaks across our faces.



SGT Kenneth Mayes holding a Soviet made
sniper rifle.



Pile of captured small arms. B Co destroyed all of these weapons and more. Notice the tank has a mine roller mount on the front. Soldiers are in their chemical suits and the haze is still in the air.

I put out instructions with regard to souvenir hunters and looting. I also put out instructions to discourage taking photographs of dead bodies. We organized burial parties and worked with the 201st Fwd Spt Bn to clean up the area. This was a sad, dirty task. Each company had personnel on these details. Every time we thought the task was almost complete, we would find more bodies. The soldiers were careful to handle personal effects and identification. Strict burial procedures were followed. I was proud of our soldiers--their discipline, their professionalism, and their respect for the dead.

The Mortar Plt discovered one booby trapped bunker. A trip wire attached to a grenade was placed in the center of the floor. It was identified prior to being tripped, however, it caused us to re-look our policy and procedures for clearing bunkers.

EPWs were rounded up from the area. We placed them on the highway and began to escort them south. D Co located a potential EPW site and held several hundred at this location until we were told the brigade site would be to the south.

**Statement by CPT Bond, the Battalion Assistant S3,
describing Objective 1 on 28 February 1991:**

When the battalion stopped at Objective 1 and night fell, the sky to our south betrayed the true nature of Iraqi occupation. The sky was lit by the burning oil wells in Kuwait. On the 1st of March, we moved north to Safwan, Iraq. From Safwan, the burning oil wells only slightly lit up the sky. When the wind blew from south to north (probably one day in five), the noon day sky looked like night. The black smoke was so thick that the sun appeared as only a yellow disk in the sky, barely visible. While the air was breathable, the smell of burning oil was putrid.

As the sun rose, we saw the burning oil wells. I counted thirty-six burning wells from where I stood. It was a sad sight. Most of the buildings in the area were leveled or shelled.

By 1800 hours, 1st Sqdn, 4th Cav, moved out. I moved the Scout Plt into our perimeter. They made a screen line from A Co to TF 3-37 in the south.

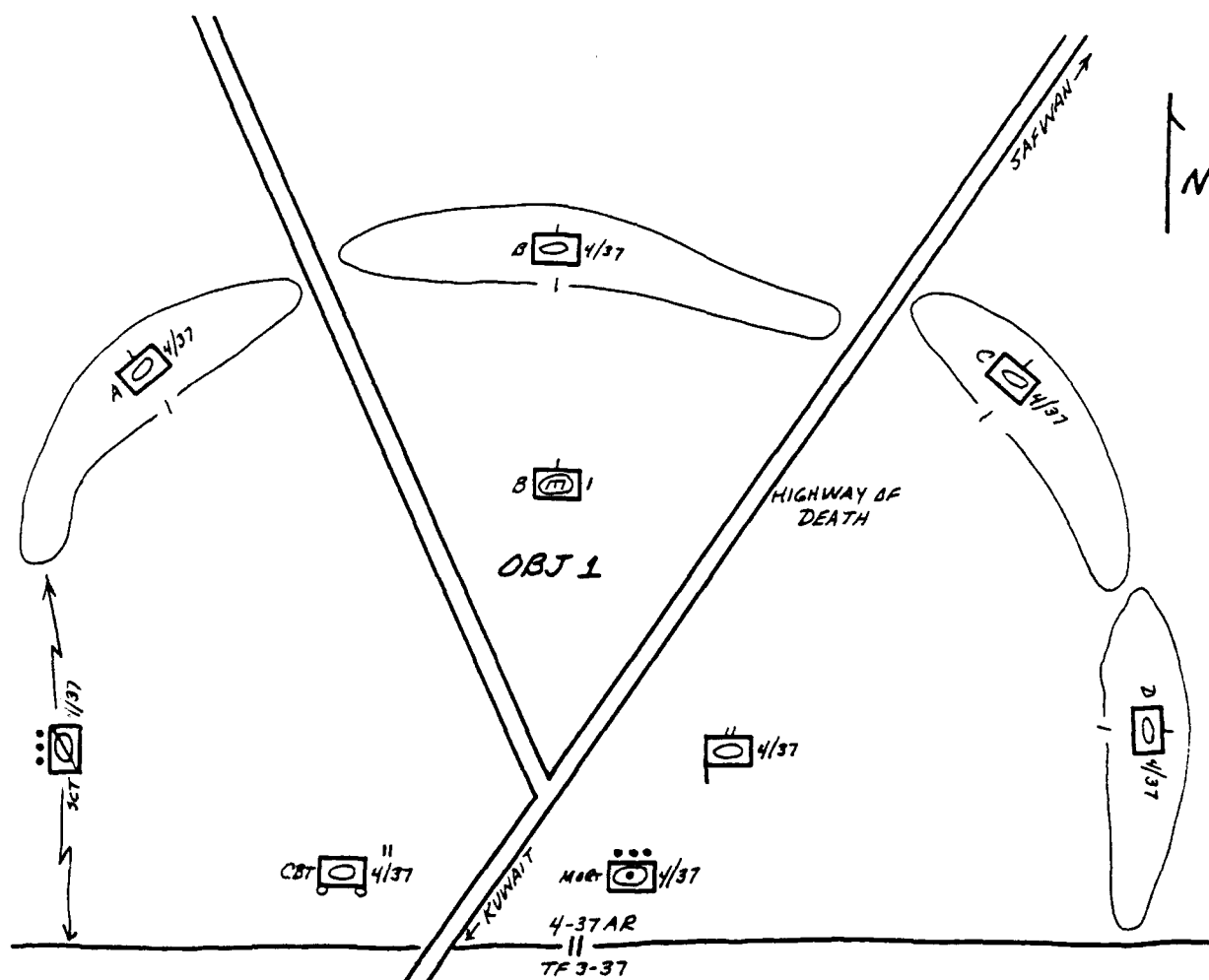


Diagram #39. Defense of Objective 1.

The missing fuel trucks showed up, led by LT Thompson. Realizing the mistake, he tried everything to get back to us. He was exhausted. We refueled all the vehicles and were prepared to continue operations by 1600 hours. I still had over fifty tanks, all six BFVs, and all the mortar vehicles available for combat.

We set out to get a good status on the missing tank crews and vehicles. Recovery operations were underway for the vehicles left behind. CSM Stockton began to organize a search party when it became apparent there were no units behind us executing any organized recovery effort.

The night proved uneventful, and most of the soldiers were finally able to get some needed rest. We stayed at fifty percent alert for the night. If a soldier went to relieve himself, he still took a loaded weapon and protective mask. It was sinister--the residue of war all around us, the dead, and the burning oil wells in the background.

Statement by CPT Torrence, the C Co Commander, describing the capture of an enemy BTR attempting to return to Iraq the night of 28 February 1991:

While in the battalion TOC at night, I received a report over the battalion net on a moving BTR in our sector. We had had plenty of vehicle identification during the war, and I was sure it was, in fact, an enemy vehicle. Because of the cease fire in effect, the capture of the vehicle was rather tricky. The tanks from 1st Plt surrounded the vehicle and dismounted to capture the Iraqi officer. He was trying to drive back to Iraqi territory. Again, the soldiers showed the self-discipline we sometimes rarely give them credit for in the peace-time Army.

Move to Safwan

COL Moreno gave LTC Gross and I instructions for securing an area around the town of Safwan and the adjacent airfield. TF 5-16 and the 1st Sqdn, 4th Cav were now assigned to the 2nd Bde. We were told to move up the road, going north, with two companies abreast, and block off the northern approaches into Safwan. Our LD time was 0900 hours.

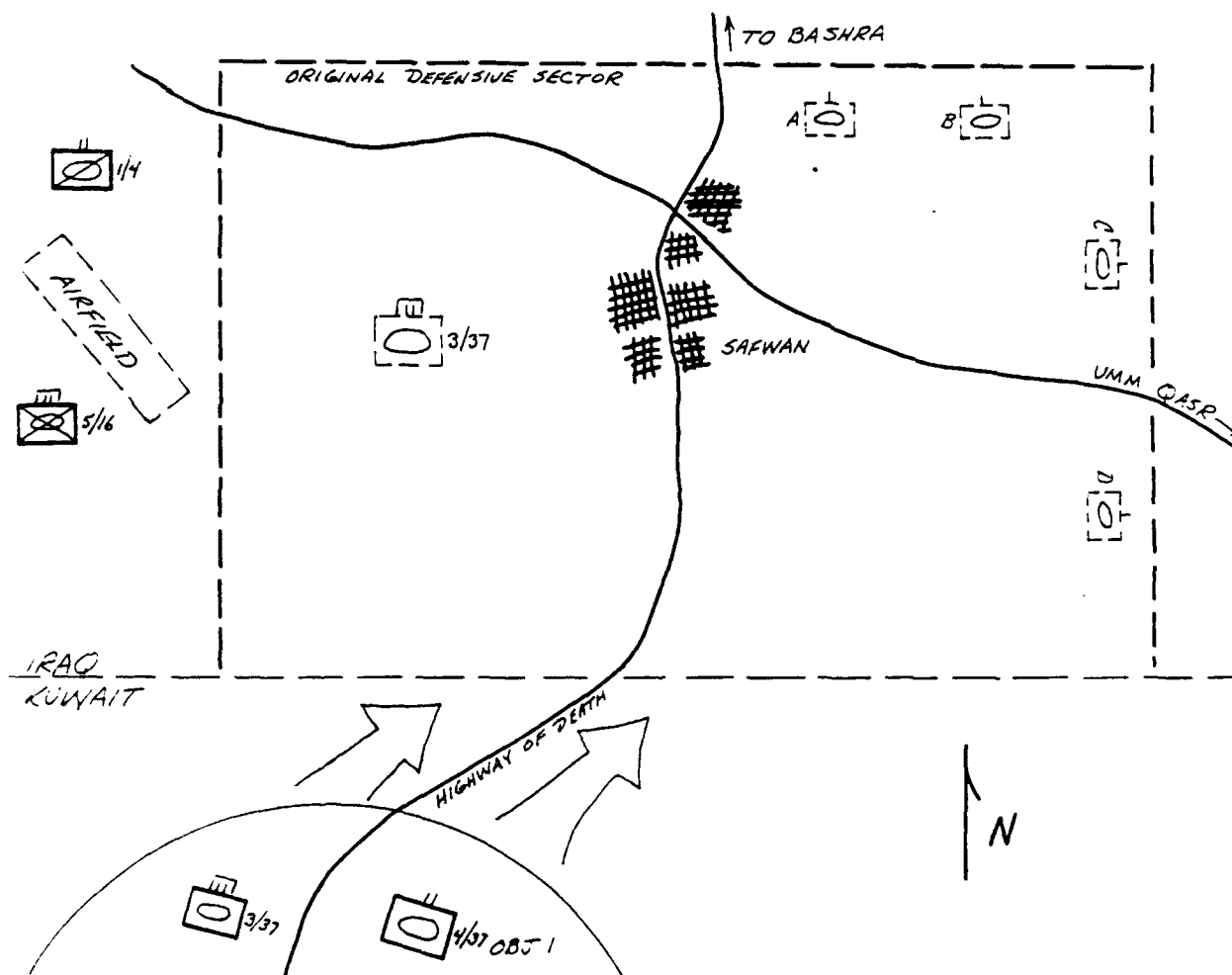


Diagram #40. The Plan to Seize Safwan.

As we prepared to launch, the battalion received the first change of a dozen changes. We were put on hold and the LD was changed to 1000 hours. Then I was instructed to move forward with LTC Gross and link-up with COL Moreno. The link-up point was about twenty kilometers to our north along the road. I departed on my tank and raced down the road. When I arrived at the link-up point, I noticed a stand-off between howitzers from the 4th Bn, 5th FA, and Iraqi tanks and machine gun positions. I was instructed by COL Moreno to bring up two tank companies ASAP. I called A and B Cos and they drove in column, straight down the road. At the link-up point, they went on line, pushed to the rear of the howitzers to make their presence known, and halted. I instructed D and C Cos to take positions on the airfield perimeter and to tie in with TF 5-16. Everyone was moving.



Photo taken from LTC Marlin's tank as he moved down the road to link-up with COL Moreno.



Completely destroyed customs building. The entire roof caved in along the main highway en route to the link-up point with COL Moreno.



Photo taken from LTC Marlin's tank facing to the rear. A Co tanks are in column and moving toward Safwan.

I then received instructions from COL Moreno to move one tank company forward, to a very threatening position, against the Iraqis guarding Safwan. I had A Co move up, forward of the howitzers. I sent B Co to a position on the airfield perimeter. B Co was to link-up and fill the gap between C Co and TF 3-37. The gap was too large for B Co to fill. I sent the Scout Plt to fill the gap.



Stand-off against the Iraqis. Safwan is in the distance. 4th Bn, 5th FA soldiers and howitzers guard the approach. Negotiation vehicles can be seen in the far distance.



Photo taken from an A Co tank. Negotiators can be seen in the far distance.

I returned to the stand-off site. MG Rhame landed in his helicopter and BG Carter was also present. Numerous discussions took place between them, the Iraqis, and the interpreters. While the negotiations continued at the stand-off point, we continued to make changes around the airfield. There was confusion over the senior commander's intent on clearing and securing the airfield and Safwan, specifically the crossroads to the airfield. As messages were passed to us, they became hard to interpret with regard to specific geographic locations. Because most of the key leaders were involved in the discussions at the stand-off point, it was hard to get more definitive

guidance. Eventually, it became clear we were to extend the perimeter from the airfield to include Safwan. The terrain around the airfield and Safwan was irrigated by numerous berms and was difficult to maneuver through.

Statement by CPT Martin, the B Co Commander, describing the terrain around the airfield on 1 March 1991:

On the 1st and 2nd of March, B Co received several FRAGOs directing us to move through terrain consisting of farm plots with berms between each plot. The berms were breaking our tracks and suspensions at an alarming rate. We decided our mine plows could level the berms and pave a route for all vehicles. The plows were very successful in making routes and preventing damage to our suspensions.

I had B, C, and D Cos swing like a gate to cover the new assignment. We still had to maintain contact with TF 5-16 to the west.

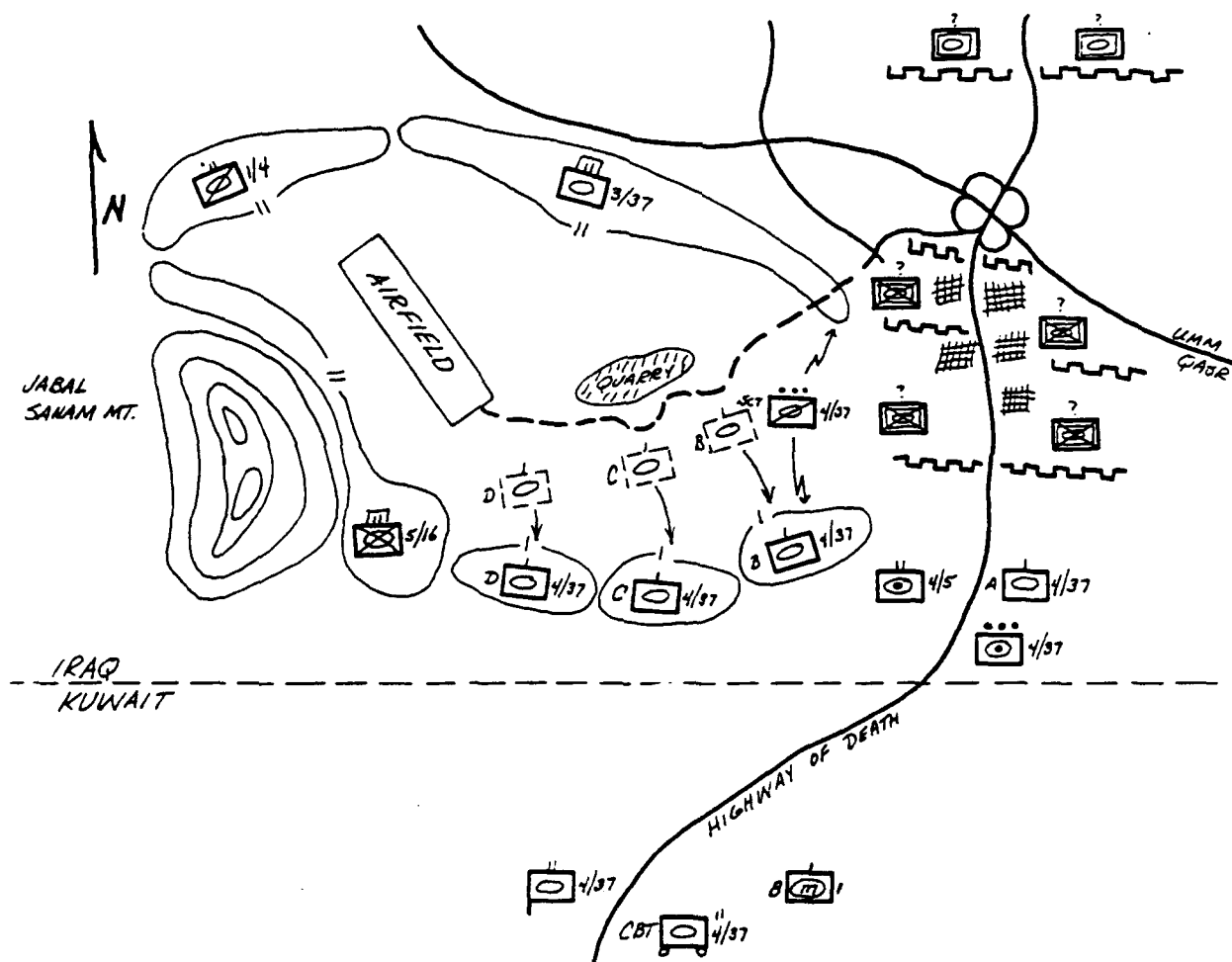


Diagram #43. Adjusting the Perimeter Around Safwan and the Airfield.

In the middle of this move, I received instructions to send a tank company to the road junction leading to the airfield. I complied by sending B Co. I finally departed the stand-off site with my tank for the airfield perimeter. I wanted to help get the crossroad issue resolved.

I drove around the west side of the town and found the road I thought would lead to the airfield. I was in the town of Safwan, where I met LTC Gross and MAJ Paul S. Izzo, the TF 3-37 Battalion S3. We dismounted and did a map reconnaissance to decide where we were located. Two Iraqi officers approached us. LTC Gross became involved in a discussion with the officers.

I departed to do a reconnaissance of the road I thought would lead to the airfield. I was afraid it would get dark before we were set. The road did not lead to the airfield. I ended up on the north side of town where I observed several Iraqi BTRs and tanks with dismounted soldiers. I realized I was too far forward and alone. This was not prudent under the circumstances. The 4th Bn, 5th FA, was heavily targeting all of Safwan. I returned to the road junction in town where I had left LTC Gross. As I was returning, COL Moreno called and instructed me to attack through the town with a tank company from the west. He would attack with A Co from the south simultaneously.

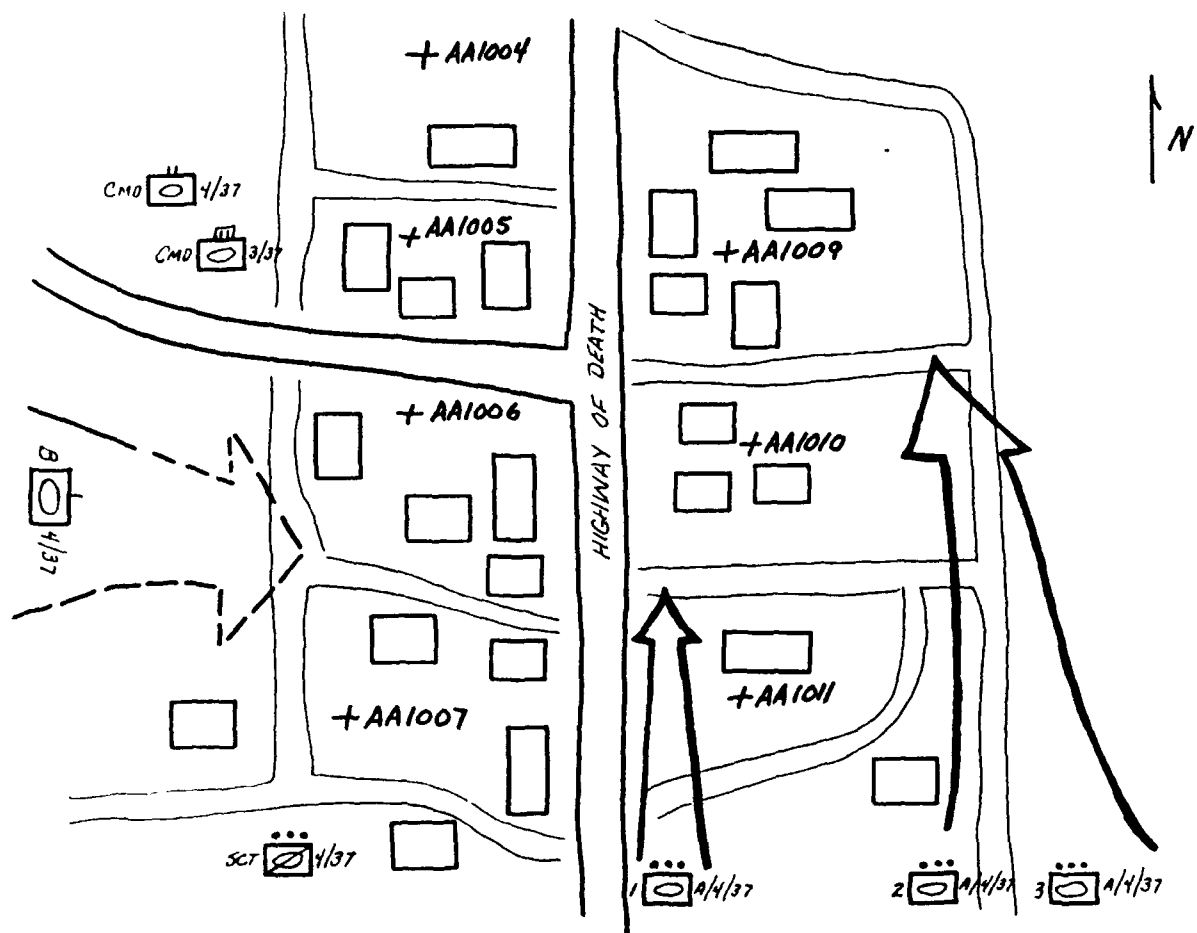


Diagram #44. Attacking Through Safwan.

COL Moreno called and said he was attacking through the town with A Co. He had given the Iraqis an ultimatum at the stand-off site--move north or die. B Co was still too far away to make the attack from the west. I called B Co and told them to terminate the attack mission. I informed COL Moreno I was already on the west side of town. In reality, LTC Gross and I, with our tanks, were sitting at the main road junction near the center of town when A Co attacked through town, on line. COL Moreno's BFV was with them when they attacked. He stopped at our location and we had a brief discussion on the situation. He was unaware we were so near the center of town.

Statement by CPT Beals, the A Co Commander, describing the attack on Safwan on 1 March 1991:

We moved from Objective 1 with A Co leading. A Co passed the LD at 1000 hours with one tank company from TF 3-37 on the left flank. We followed the highway north and went into a hasty defense just south of Safwan. 4th Bn, 5th FA was set up in front of us. Later, I received the order to move up and secure a position just south of the Iraqi lines south of Safwan. We were set by 1300 hours. 4th Bn, 5th FA, moved behind us and set up to do an indirect fire mission on Safwan at 1600 hours. COL Moreno pulled A Co up to the brigade radio net.

I met COL Moreno at a berm overlooking the enemy positions. He told me I was facing an enemy force who thought they were winning the war. In fact, I later learned the Iraqi commander thought we were trying to surrender because we were surrounded by the Republican Guard Army. COL Moreno gave the Iraqis an order to move in twenty minutes or we would attack and kill them.

I was standing next to LT Michaels, the A Co FIST. He told me the only action they saw was some soldiers moving from door to door carrying some sniper rifles and RPG launchers. I was happy they planned to strike the town with some artillery fire first. COL Moreno called me on the brigade net and told me to

move out--clear the town. He also ordered us to sweep through the town buttoned up. The A Co mission was to ensure the town was clear and link-up with the rest of the "Thunderbolts" securing the airfield.

We crossed the LD on line and began moving toward the town. Just before entering the first line of buildings, A34, commanded by SFC Gallow, went into protective mode. 1SG Hurley called and told me he would police him up, so we continued the attack. The company was scattered once in the town. I skirted through the east side of town with my White 4 [2nd Plt] and Blue 3 [3rd Plt] element (SFC Fernandez and SSG Lecuyer were the track commanders). LT McBroom (Ace 5), was with my Red Element [1st Plt] led by LT Evans. My 2nd Plt went through the center of town with LT Kool in A21 and SSG Carl L. Pearson in A23. We linked up at the crossroads north of the town right at dusk. It got dark real quick.

I was down to eleven tanks at the end of the mission. A14, commanded by SFC Darryl S. Woodard, threw tracks in the middle of town. Ace 7 [1SG] grabbed some extra tracks from my other vehicles. They fixed it and put it back together in the dark. The crew told me later their pucker factor was high. Half of them were on local security as they changed track blocks in the dark. The company moved to secure the east side of town and linked in with the Scout Plt (Wolf Pack) on our right and Death Dealer [D Co] on our right. A14 recovered A34 and towed it into position just after 2400 hours on 2 March 1991.

The three of us decided on the best method to secure the perimeter. I positioned B and C Cos along the road to the airfield. I positioned D Co on the major intersection north of Safwan. D Co was tied in with C Co, TF 3-37, on their west flank, and A Co on their east flank. A Co moved out of town and was positioned along the entire eastern side of Safwan. I positioned the Scout Plt to man the southern main checkpoint on the road. The Mortar Plt took a position between TF 5-16 and the Scout Plt.



A Co on the east side of Safwan. Notice the trench works for defense.

I spent until about 0300 hours ensuring all the units were set. D Co's position became the new "Checkpoint Charlie" of the Gulf War. MAJ Garrity positioned the TOC at an abandoned gas station along the road to Safwan. CPT Hall positioned the trains farther south and occupied what appeared to be an abandoned Iraqi class II and IV storage area.

Statement by CPT Hall, the Battalion S4, describing the combat trains' location and souvenir hunters on 1 March 1991:

During this time, the combat trains set up in a built-up area appearing to be an Iraqi corps supply point. The area had a great deal of TA-50 (a soldier's individual issue of equipment based on the

Table of Allowance 900-50), cooking equipment, medical equipment, and vehicle repair equipment. Once the area was cleared by MAJ Cook, his driver, SGT Edward A. Graham (my driver), and me, I went back to Objective 1 and led the combat trains to the new location. The trains continued to support the battalion with medical and maintenance support throughout their stay from the built-up area.

We were constantly visited by "trophy" hunters. Most of them were rear echelon CSS soldiers and I made it clear to them they were not welcome. All the heroes come out when the bullets stop.

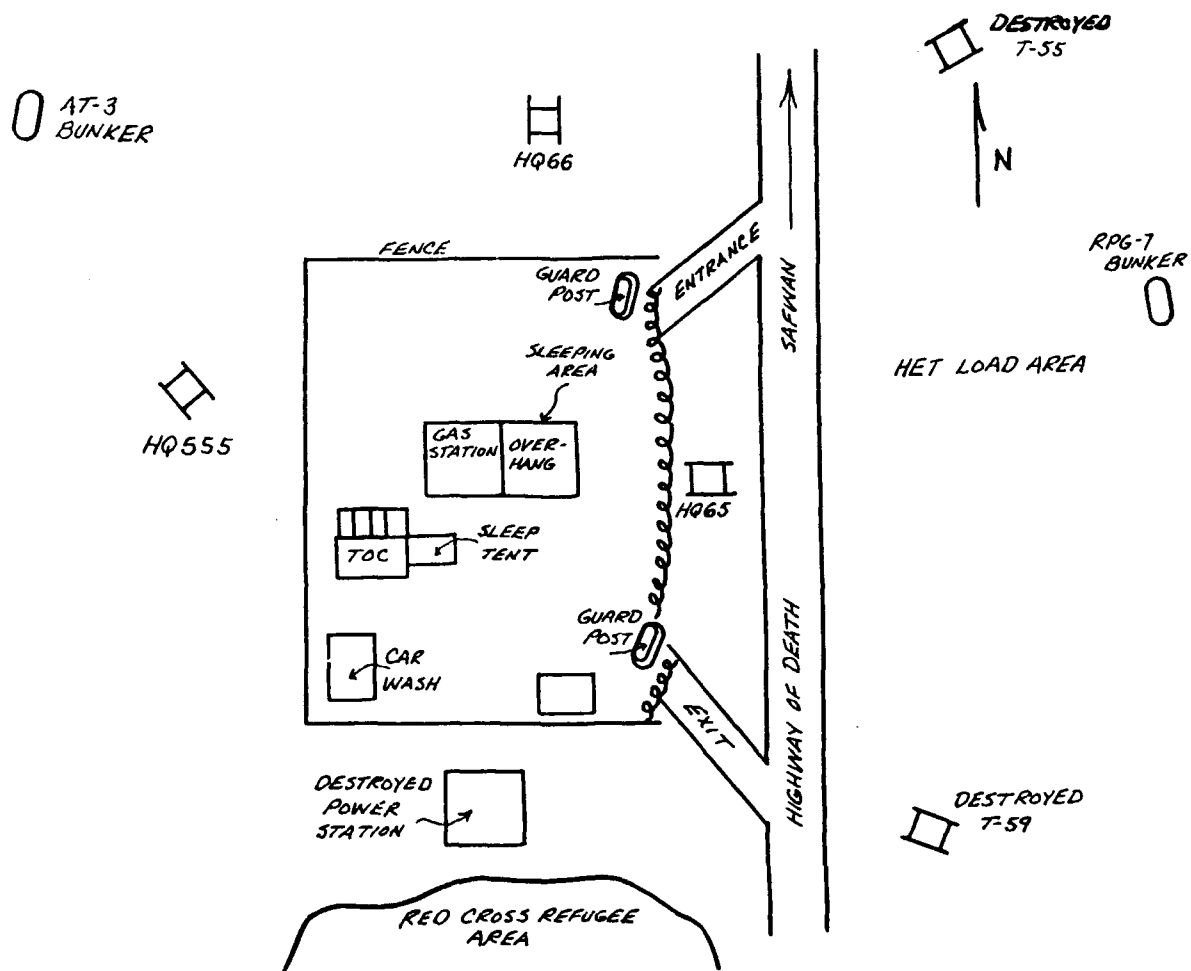
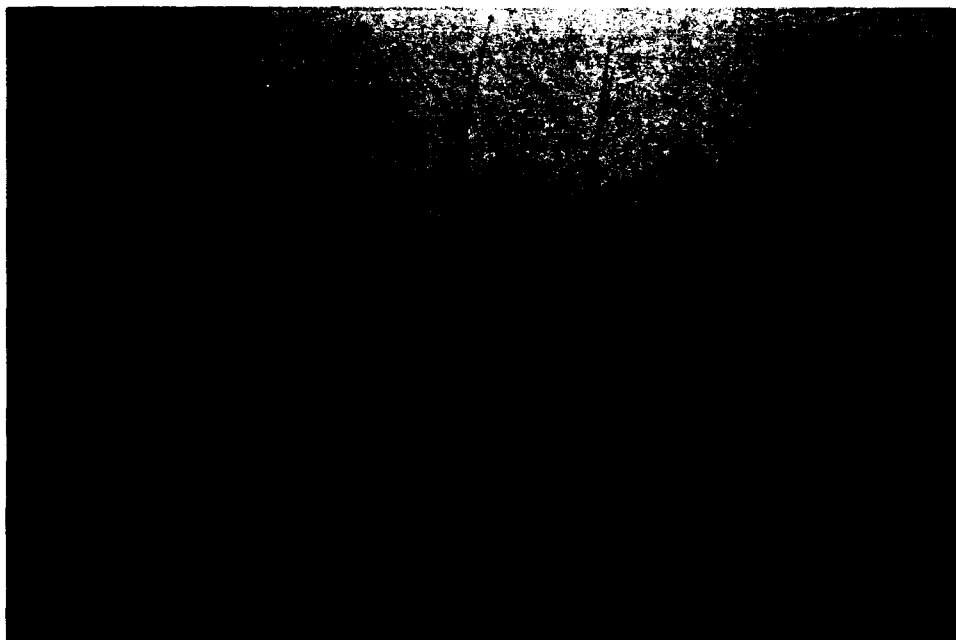


Diagram #46. The Battalion TOC.



Aerial photo of the tactical operation center at the gas station. The fence around the station provided excellent security.



The tactical operation center located to the rear of the gas station.



Aerial photo of the abandoned Iraqi supply depot occupied by the combat trains.



Another aerial photo of the combat trains' location at the abandoned supply depot. Notice the berms and fighting positions dug in throughout the area and the haze in the air.

D Co observed the Iraqi tanks retreating to the north. They were T55s and BMP/BRDMS. They took new positions fifteen hundred meters away. At one point, they started their engines and CPT Wock went to REDCON 1, ready to fight. In the end, some of the Iraqis dismounted the combat vehicles, put on civilian clothes, and marched to the CP to turn themselves in as EPWs.

Statement by CPT Wock, the D Co Commander, describing the established CP Charlie on 1 March 1991:

Around 2200 hours on March 1, 1991, I met LTC Marlin at a crossroads in the town of Safwan. At this time, he indicated the position he wanted D Co to

occupy. Basically, we were to tie in with C Co TF 3-37 in the north on our left, occupy a three kilometer perimeter on the northern and eastern outskirts of Safwan, and tie in with A Co on our right flank. In addition, LTC Marlin also mentioned MG Rhame would like to see an M1 tank in position near the bridge or overpass where the highways to Basra and Umm Qasr cross just north of Safwan. According to LTC Marlin, this tank's mission was to be a demonstration of American resolve by positioning itself in plain view overwatching this bridge.

At 0730 hours on March 2, 1991, I ordered D14 to move into position near the bridge on the northern side. SFC James, the Tank Commander of D14, maneuvered his M1 tank into position on the north side of the bridge protected by an off ramp from Umm Qasr in the east. He immediately began to scan his sector to his front using the tank's thermal sight. The next thing I knew, SFC James was giving me an excited spot report about a T55 tank he detected at a range of five hundred and fifty meters. I hopped into my HMMWV, D6, and my driver sped us toward the bridge. En route to the bridge, SFC James informed me of the locations of an additional T55 tank and at least four MTLBs.

At this point, I could not believe what I was hearing. The most forward Iraqi positions were supposed to be at least two thousand meters north of the bridge. I moved my HMMWV up onto the bridge using an on-off ramp. I did not like what I saw. Being elevated ten meters higher than SFC James' tank, I could clearly see several Iraqi ADA guns, tanks, and MTLBs. All of these positions were dug in and manned. Realizing we were within seven hundred meters of this unexpected array of military equipment was enough impetus to cause my HMMWV to speed back down the on-off ramp at least as fast as we went up. At the same time, I realized D14 was vastly outnumbered, so I called forward the entire 3rd Plt. I passed on the spot report to LTC Marlin. He informed me he would meet me under the bridge.

By the time LTC Marlin got to the bridge, I had placed one section of two tanks on the northern side of the bridge, and two tanks on top of the bridge. LT Cook, the 3rd Plt Leader, reported the enemy vehicles' locations to me. At the same time, his platoon began cross-talking between tanks and exchanging ranges to the targets they had identified. I made sure all of the 3rd Plt understood we were still in a "weapons hold" status--despite the fact none of them felt too good about the situation facing us.

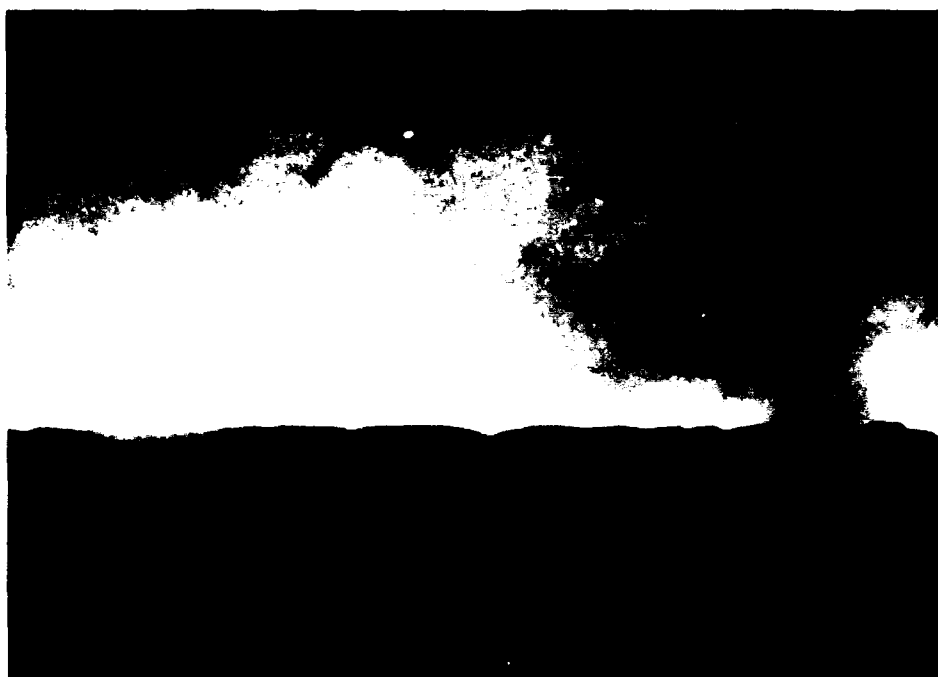
When LTC Marlin arrived at the bridge, I briefed him on the situation. He was generally pleased with the positioning of the tanks and made no changes. He also made sure we understood we were in a "weapons hold" status.

Once I was sure 3rd Plt was over the initial jitters about the situation and their mission, I returned to my company CP.

Around 0930 hours, COL Moreno showed up at 3rd Plt's position. He arranged all four of the tanks on top of the bridge the way he wanted them.

3rd Plt continued to scan their sector. At 1125 hours, SFC Daniel P. Avicola reported the Iraqi crews, which were previously lounging about their vehicles, began to board their vehicles and start their engines. I ordered both the 3rd Plt and the rest of D Co to REDCON 1. For a few more minutes, 3rd Plt and the enemy glared at each other in a Mexican stand-off. Suddenly, the Iraqi vehicles began to withdraw along the highway leading north to Basra. I was further surprised to learn from 3rd Plt's spot reports we had faced down forty-one MTLBs, eleven T55 tanks, six D30 towed artillery pieces, and approximately twenty-five enemy trucks with troops.

Safwan was a dirty town. All the civilians had fled. The buildings were shelled out and the town was littered with destroyed military and civilian vehicles. Dogs were everywhere. LTC Fake called brigade to ask permission to kill some dogs eating the dead human bodies. Permission was denied--fear of a cease fire violation. We buried the bodies. Trash was everywhere. At night, the burning oil fields became more noticeable as the horizon stayed illuminated.



Burning oil wells at night. They are approximately thirty kilometers away.



Photo of the road junction where LTC Marlin and LTC Gross met up with COL Moreno. Photo is taken looking south. This is in the center of Safwan.



Photo of the same road junction looking south.



Photo looking south from center of Safwan. Refugees are returning home. All destroyed vehicles were pushed to the side of the road.

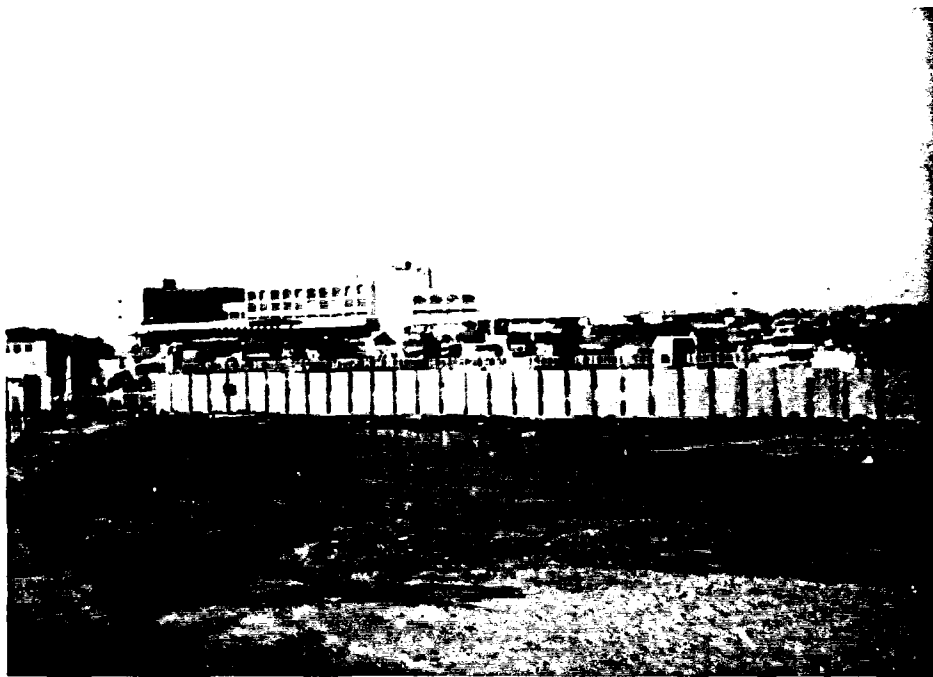
I attached the two headquarters tanks to C Co to help line the road to the airfield. We were told the peace negotiations would take place the next day. The road to the airfield was dirt and was badly flooded. We almost became stuck several times in the HMMWV attempting to get to the airfield. I was satisfied we had done all we could before daylight.

Peace Negotiation Delay

The negotiations did not occur the next day, 2 March 1991. They were put on an indefinite hold. We set about improving our positions and taking care of soldiers.

I sent B Co, 1st Engr Bn, around the area to blow up and destroy enemy equipment and ammunition stores. MAJ Garrity took an AVLB chassis and began clearing the main highway of destroyed vehicles. By the end of the day, the highway was cleared of vehicles and bodies.

TF 2-16 arrived from the original breach site. They were assigned a portion of the sector and two of their BFV companies were assigned the same section of road as our B and C Cos. The intent was to make a powerful show of force along the road the Iraqi delegation would take to the airfield. This became known as "Delegation Avenue." We continued to rehearse and set the stage for the arrival of the Iraqi delegations. Engineer units arrived and improved and changed the road to the airfield. This caused us to make adjustments on the position of B and C Cos. Our field trains, with the 201st Fwd Spt Bn, moved into the area surrounding an abandoned hotel.



The field trains at the abandoned hotel with
the 201st Fwd Spt Bn.

We continued to wait for word on the Iraqi delegation. At 1400 hours, we had a peace negotiation rehearsal from "Checkpoint Charlie" to the airfield. This involved having all the tank crews on "Delegation Avenue" "stand to" with a serious appearance. No smiling, no waving, and all guns ready and pointing north. The intent was to make sure the Iraqi delegation received the message, "There's plenty more where this came from."

Each battalion furnished two of its best HMMWVs to drive the Iraqi delegates to the airfield from the checkpoint. I inspected the drivers and the assistant drivers. We made sure

the assistant drivers were all built like Charles Atlas. They were told to look deadly serious and not to speak to the delegates. This was not meant to be a friendly social.

COL Moreno led the HMMWVs to the airfield in his BFV. LTC Gross and MAJ Izzo trailed the convoy with their tanks. I operated the CP and was in charge of the HMMWVs and drivers. I trailed the entire procession and alerted tank crews along the Delegation Avenue. The final rehearsal went well.

CHAPTER 13

PEACE NEGOTIATIONS

3 MARCH 1991

Kuwaiti Interpreters

We were assigned two Kuwaiti citizens as interpreters. Both ad Mohammed Rammadhad and Abdul Mohsin Faray Alqatani were students in American Universities when Kuwait was invaded. They were given the rank of sergeant and issued DCUs. They were also issued and trained to fire the M16 A1 rifle. Both of these men had families in Kuwait and had not seen or heard from them since the invasion. They volunteered their services to help free their country.

I assigned Mohammed Rammadhad to the Scout Plt at the CP south of Safwan. I assigned Abdul Mohsin Faray Alqatani to D Co at the new "Checkpoint Charlie." I did this because of the civilian traffic increase in the two areas. Both of these men were very good natured and spoke perfect English. They had a sincere concern about their families.

Statement by SSG Flowers, Scout Plt Vehicle Commander, describing events at the vehicle checkpoint on 3 March 1991:

Immediately after the end of fighting in the Gulf War, my squad, HQ-235, was assigned to road CP duty on the main highway running north into Iraq. Our CP was approximately four kilometers south of the northern CP and we were on the southern outskirts of Safwan itself. The members of my crew were: SPC Ronald Thomas, gunner; PFC Brian P. Brinser, driver; PFC Jamie P. Casey, loader; PV2 Jon K. Fleming, observer; and Mohammed Rammadhad, interpreter. Our primary mission was to block the road to all civilian traffic,

both vehicular and foot, during the cease fire talks taking place at Safwan Airfield.

Around 3 March 1991, the popular uprising in Basra, Iraq, erupted and freed many Kuwaitis from the jails and prisons. Thereafter, we saw a continual trickle of refugees returning to their homes in Kuwait. At first, many came on foot; but later, caravans of cars were common. We saw cars loaded with ten to fifteen people with their belongings. Pick-up trucks carrying twenty-five people were a common sight, and we saw many groups walking south.

They all had several things in common: they were hungry, tired, and thirsty. They all told stories of abuse from the Iraqis. Some had scars from beatings, torture, and burns inflicted by their Iraqi captors. We heard of entire families being imprisoned for crimes as simple as not having changed to Iraqi car license plates. A Kuwaiti man told us he was imprisoned with one hundred men in a cell designed to hold twenty-five people. Only some of the people spoke English, but, through Mohammed, we were able to communicate with them.

One amusing incident occurred as a result of our secondary mission of checking passports of local nationals. Just after dawn one morning, a group of five Arab men in their twenties came through our CP walking south. We stopped them and asked them to show their passports. They all dropped to their knees as one and began to beg us not to shoot them. One of them kept repeating over and over, "Hosni Mubarak, George Bush, Hosni Mubarak, George Bush." They were Egyptians. We assured them they were safe and we were not going to harm them. As they went on their way, they flashed us "V" signs and said, "George Bush, USA, Number One!"

Our most frequent contact with civilians was with the press. During the cease fire talks, the only way the civilian press was allowed through our CP was if they were escorted by a military PAO. It appeared most reporters were trying to get to Basra to cover the uprisings; but, nonetheless, we could not allow them through. As time wore on, and we found out what was happening in the north, reporters would ask us what was happening.

Some reporters went to great lengths to try to talk us into letting them through. The most common way was the direct approach--"I'm on my way to Basra, I have a deadline to meet, I promise I'll stay on the

main highway." Then there was the subtle attempt--"I had a flat tire, I was with the escorted press convoy, I gotta get to the airfield."

The most subtle of all, and the hardest to spot, were the reporters who had on parts of military uniforms. One hot afternoon, a four-wheel drive vehicle carrying reporters from "Time" and some major newspapers attempted to pass through the CP. The vehicle carried the allied recognition symbol and the driver wore a DCU shirt and a Kevlar helmet. At first glance, he looked like any other PAO. As the vehicle got closer, we noticed he looked awful chubby. We stopped him and found out he was not a PAO, but, instead, was just a reporter wearing our gear. I said to him, "Pretty good, it almost worked." He knew exactly what I was talking about, but he replied, "What do you mean? What are you trying to say?"

When we blocked the road and no one was allowed through, a large number of press people would gather at our CP. It was not uncommon for twenty-five to thirty vehicles to be gathered by our vehicle, all impatiently waiting for the negotiations to be over so they could pass through. Conversations were struck up, questions were asked, and we were interviewed by several newspaper correspondents. Mohammed became a local celebrity and reporters would stop to ask about him. He was interviewed by television and newspaper reporters from around the world.

On one particularly long afternoon, while I talked with a satellite technician with ABC correspondent Mike Lee's film crew, I was asked how long it had been since I'd spoken with my family. I said, "Since before we left the States." The technician asked me if I wanted to make a phone call on their portable satellite dish, and I replied, "Only if my crew can call first." He said, "No problem. Would you mind if we tape the conversations?" Naturally, no one minded, especially since ABC was footing the bill! Some of my crew members' conversations were aired a few days later.

Later in the day, the ABC crew did a film report of my crew performing our duties around our BFV. Mike Lee stood in front of our vehicle and reported on the number of refugees coming from Iraq and what we did, too. We were clearly visible in the background and the piece was aired at night on ABC World News Tonight.

Arrival of the Iraqi Delegation

I was informed at 0600 hours on 3 March 1991 that the Iraqi delegation would arrive at 0900 hours. The peace talks were finally going to take place. I went to the airfield site the night before. It was a very busy place. No expense was being spared to make things happen as far as the site preparation was concerned. Helicopters were making aerial deliveries and the airfield was now filled with military vehicles and equipment. Even a Patriot battalion surrounded the field. New tents, satellite dishes, dining facilities, and two battalions of combat vehicles were in the vicinity of the airstrip.

TF 2-16's two BFV companies lined up along the road from "Checkpoint Charlie" to the airfield. These two companies, combined with our two tank companies, formed "Delegation Avenue." Along the entire seven kilometer length, we had the equivalent of a battalion's worth of combat vehicles--alternating tank, BFV, tank, BFV. We made sure the area along the route was policed up. The crews were not allowed to set up temporary shelters or camouflage nets. They were made to look as if they would move toward Baghdad on a moment's notice.

I moved to "Checkpoint Charlie" at 0700 hours. All of the HMMWVs with drivers, tasked to support the Iraqi delegation, were summoned. I gave them a final inspection. Nobody could tell us how many delegates the Iraqis would send. I had ten HMMWVs with drivers and assistant drivers. I had all the drivers to do their preventive maintenance and inspected

uniformity among the soldiers. They really looked sharp and were standing tall.

By 0800 hours, the two tanks with LTC Gross and MAJ Izzo and the two BFVs with COL Moreno and MAJ Lawson showed. We lined everyone up. We anticipated the Iraqis' arrival from the west. D Co's tanks parked at the entrance and exit ramps toward the northern highway. An engineer M113 APC was parked under the overpass facing north. Two MP HMMWVs showed up. We parked them on each side of the highway facing west. They turned on their highway flashers. I issued them two aircraft marking panels for the front of the HMMWVs to mark the entrance to our welcoming committee.

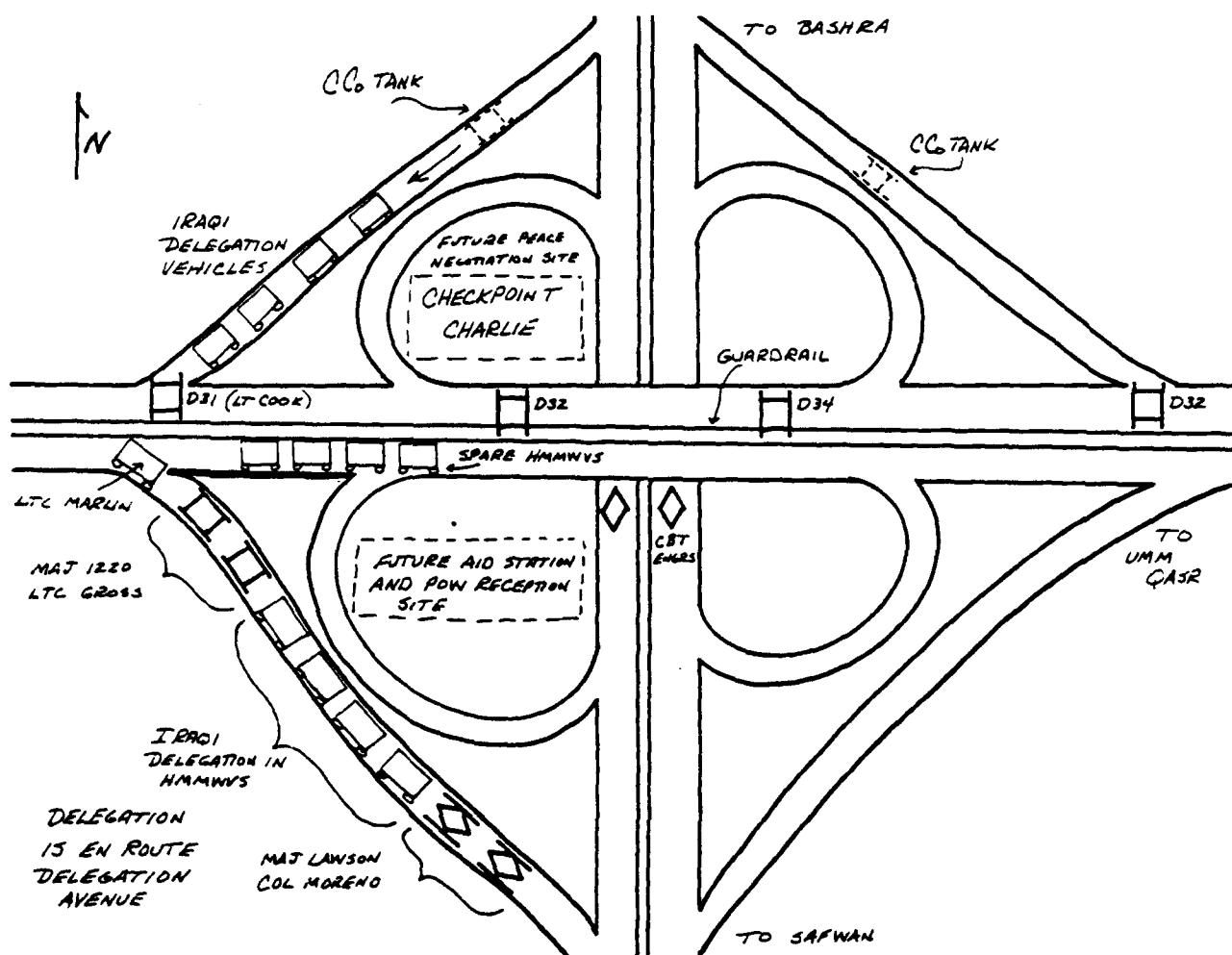
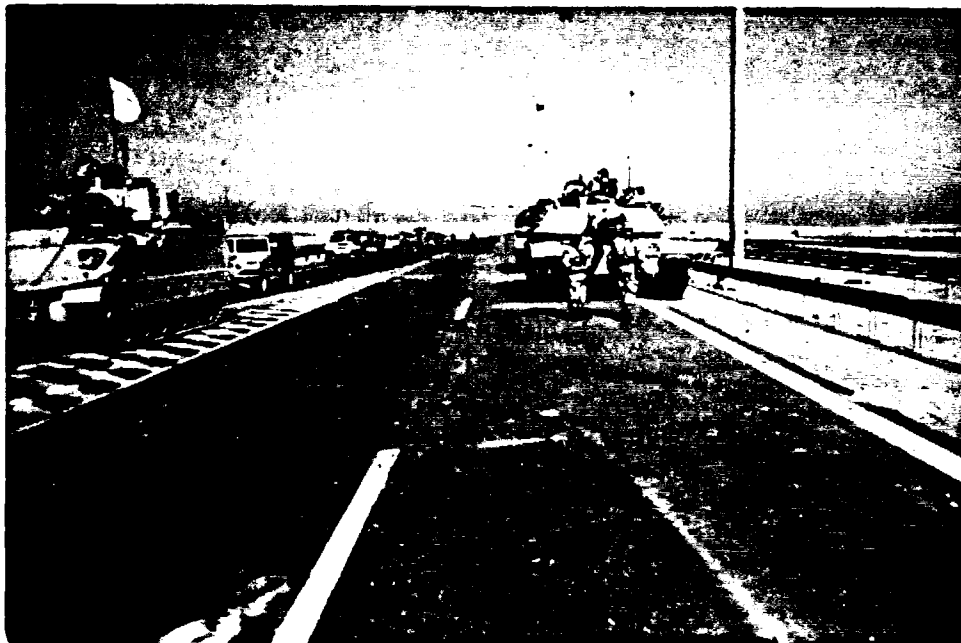


Diagram #48. Checkpoint Charlie.

I placed five of the HMMWVs in line for the delegation and placed the other five on the opposite side of the road as back-up vehicles. Once everyone was lined up, we issued a special flag for all the vehicles making up the convoy. The flag was a white square with a red "outhouse" (crescent) moon. The flags came in two sizes --the one we put on the armored vehicles was about two feet square, and the one we put on the HMMWVs was about one foot square.



LTC Marlin awaiting the Iraqi delegation at "Checkpoint Charlie." Photographer is facing west. HMMWVs on the right are back-up vehicles. The BFV and tank are facing toward the down ramp en route to the airfield. Notice the white peace flags on the vehicles.



LTC Gross standing in front of his tank awaiting the Iraqi delegation. All the vehicles in the photo are positioned to exit with the BFVs leading, then the HMMWVs with the delegates, and the tanks trailing.

We watched and waited. I wondered if this was another false alarm. We anticipated the peace talks would take several days. We planned on going through the same routine every day until they were completed. This allowed me to rotate the HMMWVs and drivers so everyone had a chance to participate. Those drivers on stand-by one day would get a chance to drive the next day. MAJ Cook and I would replace LTC Gross and MAJ Izzo the next day with our tanks. At least this was the plan.

At approximately 1100 hours, a convoy of three civilian four wheelers started to approach the CP from the north instead

of from the west. We were caught off guard. At first, we were not sure who they were. Once we identified them as the delegation, I called on the radio to the engineer M113 APC crew below the underpass to wave them up the exit/entrance ramp. The crew guided them up the ramp. I climbed over the median separator rails and had LT Cook back up his tank. I helped guide him back just far enough to allow the Iraqi vehicles to reach the top of the overpass, but not to allow them to get around the tank. This forced the delegates to dismount their vehicles.

COL Moreno dismounted and guided them to the HMMWVs. They did not want to have to climb over the railings, so they walked a little farther down the road until they found a section of crushed railing they could cross. We put one Iraqi in each of the four HMMWVs and two in the fifth one. The convoy departed and I trailed the tanks in my HMMWV. On the radio, I alerted all the combat vehicle crews stationed on "Delegation Avenue." The delegation was en route.

Statement by CPT Martin, the B Co Commander, describing "Delegation Avenue" on 3 March 1991:

After twelve hours of FRAGO after FRAGO, B Co and C Co were ordered to move to Safwan and link-up with LTC Marlin--mission to follow. C Co arrived at Safwan two hours before the Battle Force [B Co]. We, unlike C Co, had to deal with all of the berms dividing the farms in the area. At 2400 hours, our column linked up with LTC Marlin and I dismounted my tank to speak with him. C Co and B Co would be a "show of force" detachment and line vehicles along what would eventually be called "Delegation Avenue."

Initially, C Co lined the road from Safwan to the local airport. We moved in from C Co's last vehicle

and stretched our tanks to the outskirts of the airport. We both stayed on this road for the next twelve hours. The next day, at 1100 hours, CPT Torrence and I drove to Safwan to meet with LTC Marlin and COL Moreno. COL Moreno wanted to show us the new "Delegation Avenue" route. We made a reconnaissance and started our move to reposition at 1230 hours. B Co was set by 1300 hours, with expectations of a rehearsal for the real delegates at 1500 hours.

This mission was to portray a healthy, disciplined, and determined force to the delegates as they passed through to the airport. Each crew was to be in battle position looking forward in search of targets. Not one soul was to be waving or taking pictures. Our rehearsal was flawless. Each soldier understood the mission and believed that a good job now may squelch any Iraqi thoughts of future battle.

On March 3, the delegates arrived at approximately 1145 hours. We executed our mission perfectly. It was quite interesting to find out later the Iraqis were very agreeable to our terms and deliberated with "Stormin' Norman" for only twenty minutes.



LTC Marlin overlooking LT Cook's tank after it was backed up. Notice the Iraqi cars have been forced to halt.



Iraqi delegation being guided to the HMMWVs. Notice the railing they did not want to step over. Their drivers are returning to their vehicles. One of the men in the delegation is the officer LTC Gross and LTC Marlin met at the crossroads in Safwan on 1 March 1991.

The drive down "Delegation Avenue" was an awesome show of strength. The soldiers looked great, and they made a powerful statement. We entered the airstrip on the southwest end and drove the length to the negotiation site. As the two trail tanks arrived on the asphalt, they split--one to the left and one to the right. They accelerated and raced past the convoy of HMMWVS. Another demonstration of power.

I asked SFC Boudreau, one of the HMMWV assistant drivers, if the Iraqis attempted to speak to them. He said they were

very quiet the whole trip, until the tank zoomed by--that captured their attention! SFC Boudreau, the Medical Plt Sergeant, winner of the Ft. Riley heavy category power-lifting weight competition, also made a powerful statement.

The Jabal Sanam Mountain overlooked the airfield and was a major terrain feature in the area. It provided the perfect backdrop for the historical event.



The Jabal Sanam Mountain. The photograph is taken from the east, on the airstrip. The Jabal Sanam was saturated with destroyed Iraqi ADA weapons and communication equipment.

At the Peace Negotiation Site

At the airfield, the Iraqis were mobbed by reporters and bystanders. They were immediately ushered into a separate tent. After ensuring the Iraqis were not harboring any weapons, they were taken to the peace negotiation tent. A few minutes passed and GEN Schwarzkopf arrived in an Army Blackhawk helicopter, escorted by a troop of Apache helicopters. This, too, was a demonstration of power meant to get the Iraqis' attention. He went into his tent and made the Iraqis wait.



GEN Schwarzkopf's personal tent on the airfield. The tent in the background is the negotiation tent. Note all the reporters standing around waiting.

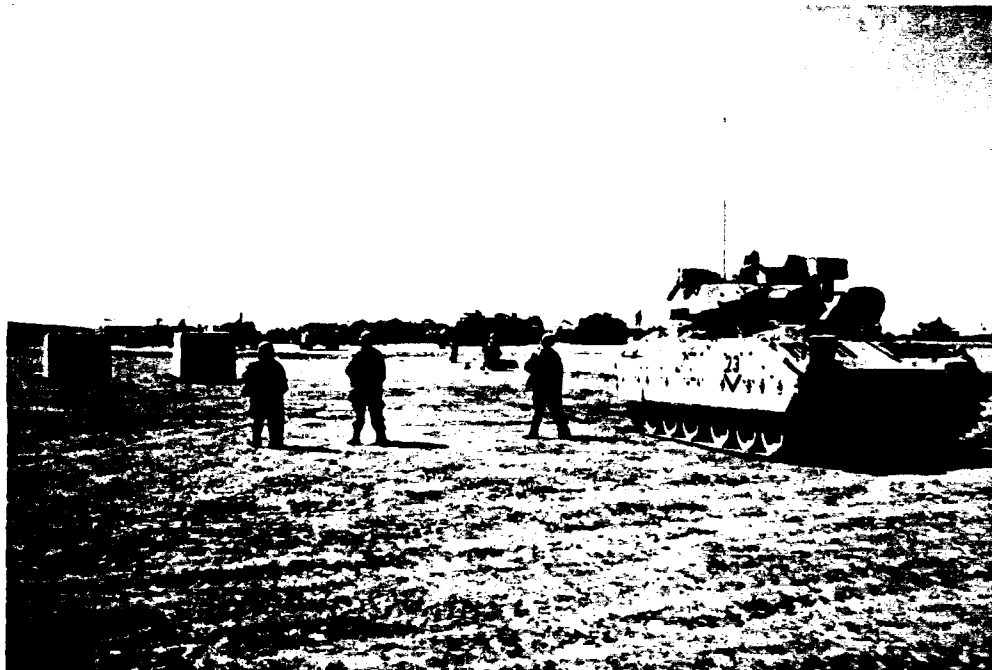


The Apache helicopters used to escort GEN Schwarzkopf to the airfield. Our escort tanks and vehicles lining up behind them for the return trip to "Checkpoint Charlie."



GEN Schwarzkopf arriving with LTG Franks at the airfield.

The airfield had a carnival atmosphere. Reporters were everywhere. All of my fellow Battalion Commanders were there. Even though we were good friends and had been in the desert for months together, it was the first time we had actually seen each other. I ran into MAJ Murtie, GEN Schwarzkopf's aide-de-camp. We served together in the FRG. I ran into many familiar faces I had not see in a long while.



A BFV and crew circling the airfield. Part of the show of force. Even the crews stood at parade rest outside the vehicle for the Iraqi delegation's arrival.



TF 3-37 tank and crew on the airfield. Note the mine plow and the "Welcome to Iraq" sign. Both made the CNN evening news.

The negotiations took less than an hour to complete. I think everyone was stunned by how quickly they completed their business.

Prior to coming out of the tent, I was instructed to gather all the flags from the escort vehicles to have them autographed by GEN Schwarzkopf as souvenirs for our units. I gathered as many as I could and passed them to MAJ Murtie.

Departure of the Iraqi Delegation

The Iraqi delegation emerged from the tent and headed for the escort vehicles. They were being escorted by GEN

Schwarzkopf and the crowd followed them to the vehicles. We had already turned all the vehicles around and were prepared for the exit. As the Iraqis climbed in their vehicles, I jumped in my vehicle and raced ahead of them along "Delegation Avenue," alerting all the combat crews.



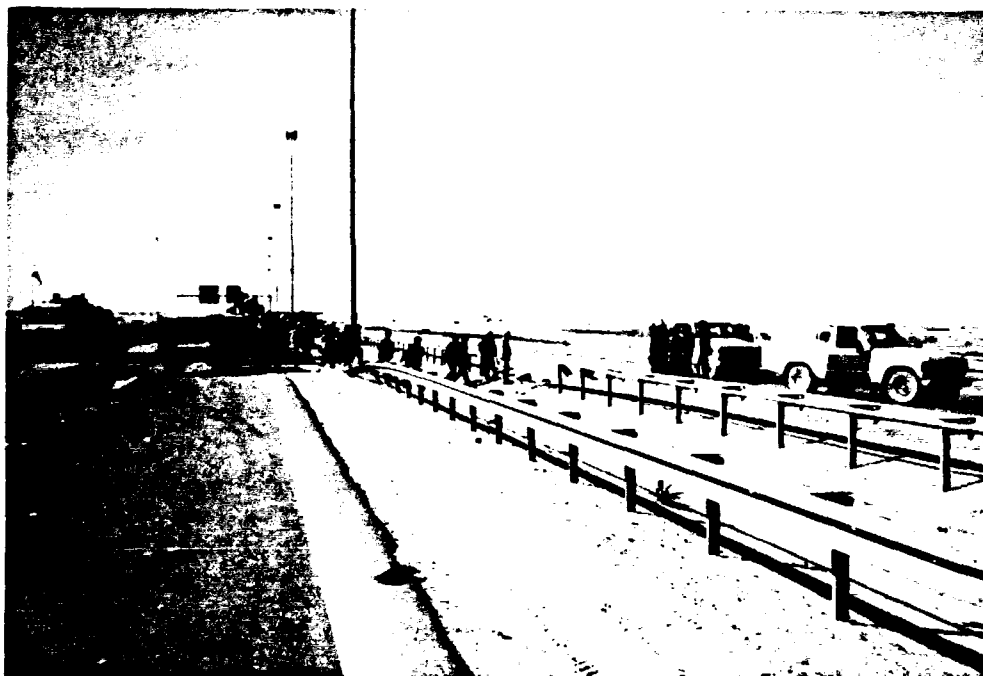
The Iraqi delegation exiting the negotiation site with GEN Schwarzkopf. Security was extremely heavy in the area.

The Iraqi delegation was right behind me. I arrived at "Checkpoint Charlie" and made sure all arrangements were in place to expedite the Iraqis' exit. I backed up LT Cook and his tank for the Iraqi trucks to pull forward and face in the opposite direction. LT Cook's tank threw a track. I backed it

up anyway. I took it over the median railing to clear the road. As the Iraqi delegation arrived, their vehicles were ready. They chose to walk through the flattened railing area again, mounted their vehicles, and departed. It was over.



Trailing tanks bring the Iraqi delegation back to the overpass at "Checkpoint Charlie."



The Iraqi delegation departing for their trucks. Notice the flattened railing they are walking through.

We all returned to the airfield. MG Rhame congratulated all of us on a job well done. There would be no further negotiations at the airfield. The Iraqis agreed to all the terms.

We had to wait for LTG John J. Yeosock to arrive. He wanted to personally congratulate us and to thank us. He arrived at 1500 hours. He was jubilant and full of enthusiasm. His exact words, as he shook all of our hands, were, "You guys really pulled our ass out of a crack." He was very appreciative of our efforts.



At the airfield after the negotiations.
Left to right: LTC Baker, LTC Wilson, LTC
Fake, LTC Gingrich, LTC Gross, LTC Hand, COL
Moreno, LTC Hawkins, MG Rhame, LTC Marlin
(kneeling).

I was instructed to reposition C and B Cos back on the perimeter of Safwan. "Delegation Avenue" had served its purpose. I assigned CPT Torrence and his company to fill a gap between D and A Co. I positioned B Co between TF 2-16 and the Scout Plt's CP. We assisted in helping to police up the area around the airfield. Many of the so-called luxury items like folding chairs, sandbags, and portable tables, were given away. We were more than willing to assist in the removal of items we could use to improve our quality of life.

a job well done and was really appreciated by the soldiers.

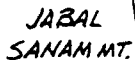


Diagram #49. The New Defense of Safwan.

I received the mission to continue manning "Checkpoint Charlie." We sent SFC McCurnin with a detail of soldiers to set up a tent at the bottom of the underpass. This mission also entailed blowing up several CBU duds in the area.

From this point on, all future negotiations would be executed from this location. LT Ortega donated his American flag for the site. His mother sent him the flag and it was one previously flown over our nation's capitol.



The tent site at "Checkpoint Charlie." Notice the tank on the overpass (D Co). Communication equipment, generators, and light sets were brought in to make the site a twenty-four hour operation.

We were glad the war was over. We were glad the peace negotiations were over. We anticipated we might get home sooner than expected. We turned our attention to the maintenance of our equipment and our soldiers. This was an historic day and we were privileged to be a part of it.

First Blood

The day ended on a sad note. SPC Thomas E. Church III had a dud CBU explode in his hand. It blew several of his fingers off and opened the entire portion of his thigh. He had received a safety brief by his Platoon Sergeant with regard to avoiding duds. He was shown some duds on the ground at a previous site and told to avoid them. He continued to search for souvenirs in spite of this advice.

Statement by CPT Torrence, the C Co Commander, describing SPC Church's accident on 3 March 1991:

The battalion had its first casualty. It was after the halt of the offensive. The negotiations between coalition forces and the Iraqis had just been completed. C Co was lined up along the route the negotiators took. LOGPAC showed up about 1300 hours, but because the negotiators had not yet departed, we could not begin.

SPC Church, fuel HEMMT driver in the Support Plt, got out of his truck and started searching for souvenirs. He was instructed by SGT Larry L. Petroski, the C Co supply sergeant, and the other HEMMT driver not to search for souvenirs and to return to his truck. He finally went back to his truck.

At 1330 hours, the negotiators left and we started our LOGPAC. At about 1400 hours, the other fuel HEMMT driver informed 1SG Macasio that SPC Church was not at his post and had left again in search of souvenirs. 1SG Macasio went to look for him. While driving around, he saw SPC Church, with blood all over

him, fall from the doorway of a house. 1SG Macasio called for the medic. SGT Goff and PFC Willie D. Booker arrived, along with two tanks and CPT Torrence. CPT Torrence was unable to raise the Medical Air Evacuation (MEDAVAC). At 1435 hours, a request was sent through the battalion TOC.

SPC Church picked up a dud and appeared to have attempted to put it in his right pocket. His right hand was blown up and he was missing several fingers along with some pounds of flesh from his right leg. First aid was administered and the medics successfully kept SPC Church from going into shock. LTC Marlin arrived and helped to carry the stretcher to the MEDAVAC chopper at about 1500 hours.

This was a tragic, unfortunate event, considering we had suffered no casualties throughout the war.

After the incident, I made visits to all the HHC units and gave another safety brief. I had the tank Company Commanders re-brief their men on safety. SPC Church's accident woke up many unbelieving soldiers. They became much more sensitive to avoidance of duds after the accident. SPC Church was flown out of the country to the FRG for treatment.

CHAPTER 14

LINE OF DEMARCATION

4 MARCH 1991 - 13 MARCH 1991

The Line of Demarcation

A line of demarcation was established by the negotiators on 3 March 1991. Both sides would stay approximately two kilometers to the north and south sides of the line to avoid contact. For our purposes, the main highway running west to east through "Checkpoint Charlie" to Umm Qasr served as our key landmark for the line of demarcation. We had operational control from "Checkpoint Charlie" all the way to the east coast. Most of this was patrolled by helicopters and we did not have to move outside of our established perimeter.

On 4 March, I received an urgent call from brigade informing me to move my BAS to "Checkpoint Charlie." The word on the street was the American POWs would be brought to "Checkpoint Charlie." I went to see CPT Phillips at our BAS and told him to pack up and follow me. Within a half-hour, the entire BAS was following me to "Checkpoint Charlie." I also linked up with the 201st Fwd Spt Bn Medical Plt, stationed at the peace tent. I joined the two aid stations together and positioned them on the south side of the underpass at the checkpoint. I established the MEDAVAC site adjacent to the BAS. The 201st Fwd Spt Bn had an assigned psychiatrist. The initial concept was to give the returning POWs a quick health check and then fly them to the rear.

To clear a driveway to the BAS, the engineers used line-cutting charges to take out the guard rails. After hours of waiting, I was informed the POWs would not be coming through our sector.

About fifty reporters showed up at "Checkpoint Charlie" just as it was getting dark. They had avoided both road blocks on the main highway. CPT Wock called me. He informed me they were without PAO escorts and he wanted to know what to do. I went to his location. I asked the reporters politely to leave the area. My instructions from brigade had not changed--no PAO escort, no reporters. They were the most obnoxious and belligerent group of people I met throughout the war. The Iraqi EPWs were better behaved. They challenged my authority to tell them anything--knowing any overt action on my part would make a great story. I told all my personnel to ignore them. Tank crews buttoned up inside their tanks if they were approached. Our technique was very effective and they eventually left us alone. Later that night, several of the reporters were captured in the vicinity of Basra by the Iraqis.

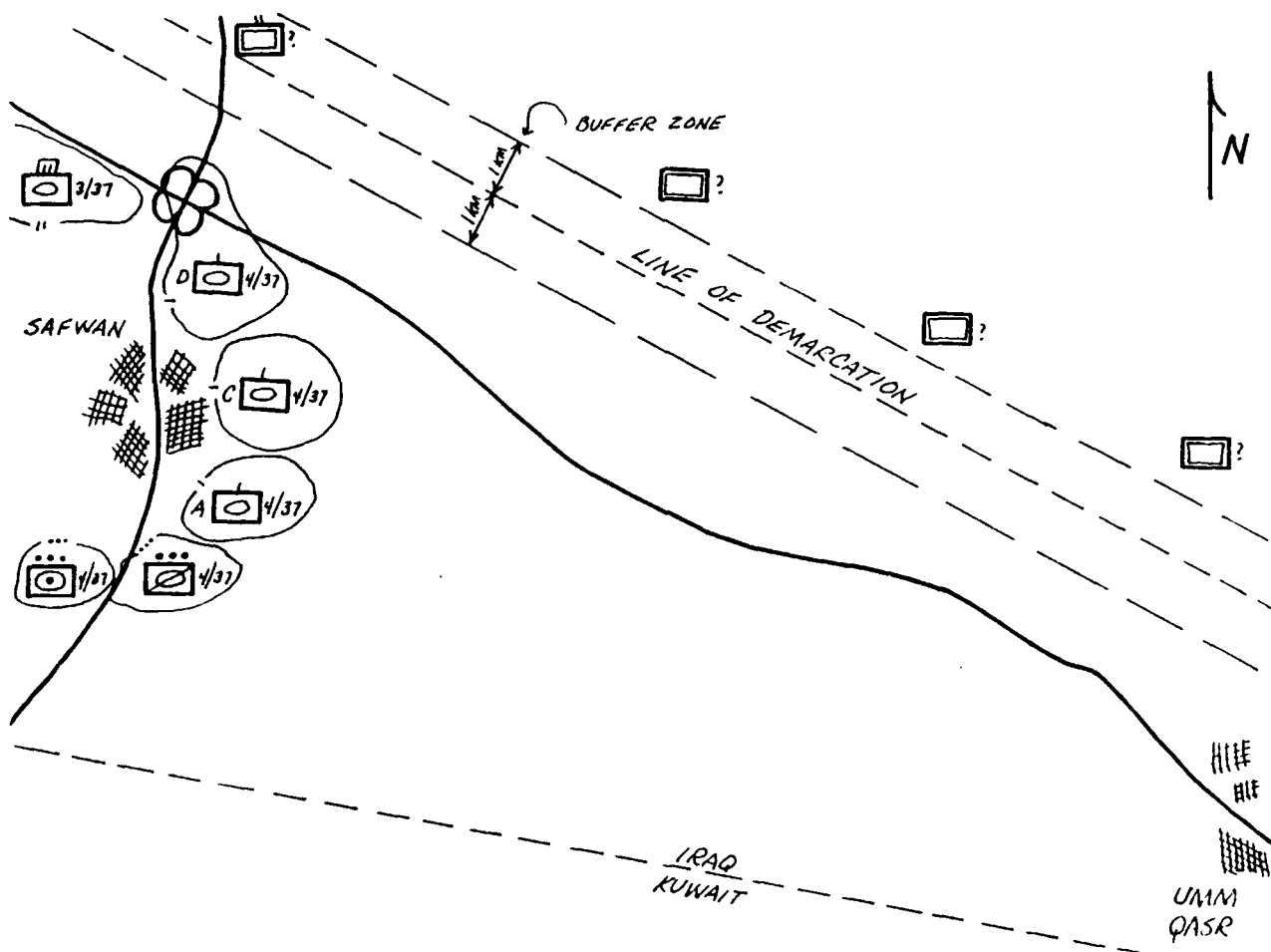


Diagram #50. The Line of Demarcation.



Photo of the peace tent site at "Checkpoint Charlie." Note the reporters in the area, the lack of drainage in the area, and LT Ortega's American flag.



Photo of the peace tent site at "Checkpoint Charlie" from LT Cook's tank on the overpass. The yellow object at the bottom of the photo is an unexploded CBU (yellow beer can) we missed when we cleared the area. This particular bomblet was capable of blowing off a person's legs. Note the wooden latrines, tents, and supporting equipment for the site. The tank to the left of the site is from LT Cook's platoon and is on the exit/entrance ramp used by the Iraqi delegation on 3 March 1991.

Statement by CPT Clidas, the HHC Co Commander, describing the use of LT Ortega's American flag used at the peace tent site on 3 March 1991:

The peace tent was established at the cease fire coordination point on 3 March 1991. LTC Marlin asked if the BSA still had their U.S. flag. The flag, once flown over Washington, D.C., was the property of the

HHC XO, LT Ortega. This flag was loaned to the peace site. It flew at "Checkpoint Charlie" at the junction of the Basra/Baghdad highway throughout our period of operation.

Refugees and civilians returning to Kuwait continued to increase on the road passing through the CP. A significant portion of these people sought shelter in the town of Safwan or on the south side of our CP at the gas station. We had a policy of no assistance unless it was life threatening. We continued to send them south and eventually the coalition Red Cross set up an assistance site adjacent to the gas station. Our policy was to prevent encouraging large masses of people from moving into the area. At times, it was difficult for the soldiers, who wanted to be charitable. However, in the end, we discovered it was a correct policy.

Clearing Operations

On 5 March, we were given the mission to check out suspected enemy CP locations in the area. I assigned the mission to the Mortar Plt. After briefing LT Powers on the situation and the mission, I told him I would accompany him to the sites and we would take one of the interpreters with us. The rest of the battalion was involved in maintenance and recovery. The soldiers were in need of personal hygiene and reorganization time.

The first site we visited was of no significance. It had been occupied by Iraqi soldiers, but no worthwhile information was left behind. I felt strange going into these places. I was

always nervous about the one, hard-core Iraqi soldier who had not received word about the termination of the war; plus, in my mind, he was willing to die for Saddam or Islam. Like all our soldiers, we were well versed in the peace time ROE. But no one wanted to die during the war or after the war. When we entered these places, we exercised extreme caution. The thought of the lone soldier or the booby trap was always in the back of our minds. Our weapons were loaded and, in most cases, in our hands ready to be used.

The area we were operating in was heavily bermed and used for farming. The terrain was slow going. Drainage was poor. There was a dirt road network throughout the area between the berms. This was quite a contrast to the open desert. The road network was littered with destroyed tanks and armored vehicles. Abandoned trucks and cars were haphazardly found around the buildings in the area. Every building in the area was used by the Iraqi army. The physical evidence was there. The evidence also indicated they had left in a big hurry.



Two of hundreds of destroyed vehicles
littering the road network. Note the berm
adjacent to the road and all the trees.

The second site was farther east and was an obvious headquarters. The main buildings were camouflaged and all the surrounding buildings had been occupied. It was spooky going through these sites. As we went through, it was easy to identify conference rooms, vehicle maintenance areas, administrative areas, sleeping quarters, bomb shelters, and bunkers. Military equipment was strewn everywhere, as was office equipment and supplies. We took what we thought we could use. I was amazed at what was left behind.

We found a set of 1:100,000 maps with graphics. The graphics depicted all the Iraqi corps CPs and sectors. In all, there were two key sets of graphics. Of particular note was the fact the maps had been produced since 2 August 1990--there were no boundary markings indicating the existence of Kuwait. We confiscated a copy machine and an abundance of office supplies. Some of the soldiers collected large posters of Saddam, gas masks, helmets, and other military paraphernalia.

We went through all the left behind files. Our interpreter, Mohammed, identified anything worth sending up to brigade. He found a large set of files on individuals of whom the Iraqis were suspicious. Our best guess at the time was this was an intelligence headquarters for a high-ranking staff officer. We sent all the material to brigade when we returned.

The site was powered by three sixty kilowatt generators. We came back later to see if we could repair one of them from the parts of three for our use.



This was the second site we visited. Originally, this was a family residence on a large farm. The Iraqi army had confiscated it for their use. Note the attempt to camouflage it with the green screens.



The bomb shelter for a high-ranking official. The interior of this shelter was very refined. Downstairs included a bed, writing desk, and communications. An escape entrance was at the rear. It was designed for one person.

The third site was at least a corps headquarters. This particular site was a large restaurant-type building and had a complex bunker network dug adjacent to it. All of the building and bunker network was interconnected underground. We could identify the separate sleeping quarters for high-ranking officers and the main operations room. It was relatively untouched by bombs or shelling. It took us several hours to clear this area.

In an adjacent corrugated steel warehouse-type building, we found an entire sand table of Kuwait on the floor. The sand table was complete with string phase lines, blocks of wood for unit designators, and all types of markers for different military symbology. It was very impressive and was very detailed.



The third site. A corps headquarters? Note the large camouflage screens and the entrances to the underground bunkers. The second entrance to the bunkers connected inside the building.



The entrance to the third site. Note the double thick layer of sand bags stacked six feet high against the walls.

We returned to the battalion TOC with the confiscated materials. MAJ Garrity was busy supervising operations in the Safwan area. He confiscated two large map board tables and some other material from Iraqi occupied buildings in Safwan. SGM Neel constructed two sandbag guard bunkers at the entrances to the gas station, and the three headquarters tanks returned to guard the perimeter.

The Tank Companies, Scout Plt, and combat trains cleared most of the surrounding area. I assigned B Co, 1st Engr Bn, the mission of destroying selected targets within our area of

operations. As we located and reported large quantities of ammunition, weapons, or armored combat vehicles, CPT Turner took his demolition experts to the site to destroy them. Over the next two weeks, every day was spent destroying military equipment and large quantities of ammunition stores. We did not have enough time to destroy it all. My philosophy at the time was: We were not going to leave one serviceable piece of equipment in Iraq. I anticipated we would pull back at some point and I wanted to make sure nothing serviceable was left behind for them to use again.

Demolition went on day and night. The engineers adopted a slogan--"no shortcuts." They were safety conscious throughout the entire operation. Several times we had close calls because nearby soldiers would not get word a demolition was going to explode. Our usual procedure was for the engineers to notify us and then we passed the information laterally and upward.

The division also came out with a slogan--"Not one more life." We adopted and endorsed this policy to the hilt. I was very sensitive to the possibility of a soldier being injured in this area of operations. All safety precautions were restated and emphasized. SGM Neel even made a large sign with the slogan on it and placed it at the entrance to the gas station.

**Statement by CPT Paluso, the Battalion Assistant S3,
describing engineer operations in the area of Safwan
on 5, 8, and 10 March 1991:**

I observed engineers blowing up bunkers and material without coordination with the unit owning the ground. The following are three examples of engineer demolitions.

The first occurred on 5 March 1991, when the engineers from B Co, 1 Engr Bn, who were attached to the battalion, blew up a fully uploaded M-59 tank across the street from the TOC located at the gas station. The tank was south of the TOC about one hundred meters, and fifteen meters from the main highway. The tank blew up while vehicles, both Army and civilian, were driving by. No warning was given; the road was not blocked; and shrapnel rained everywhere. It was funny to note vehicles continued to drive by with little concern for their safety as the secondary explosions continued for over an hour.

The second occurrence happened on 8 March, about a quarter of a mile across from the TOC, when a huge ammunition bunker stockpiled with RPG-7 anti-tank rockets went up. The force of the explosion threw RPG-7s everywhere. Some RPG-7s exploded in mid-air, and others fell within thirty meters of the TOC. Again, no warning was given.

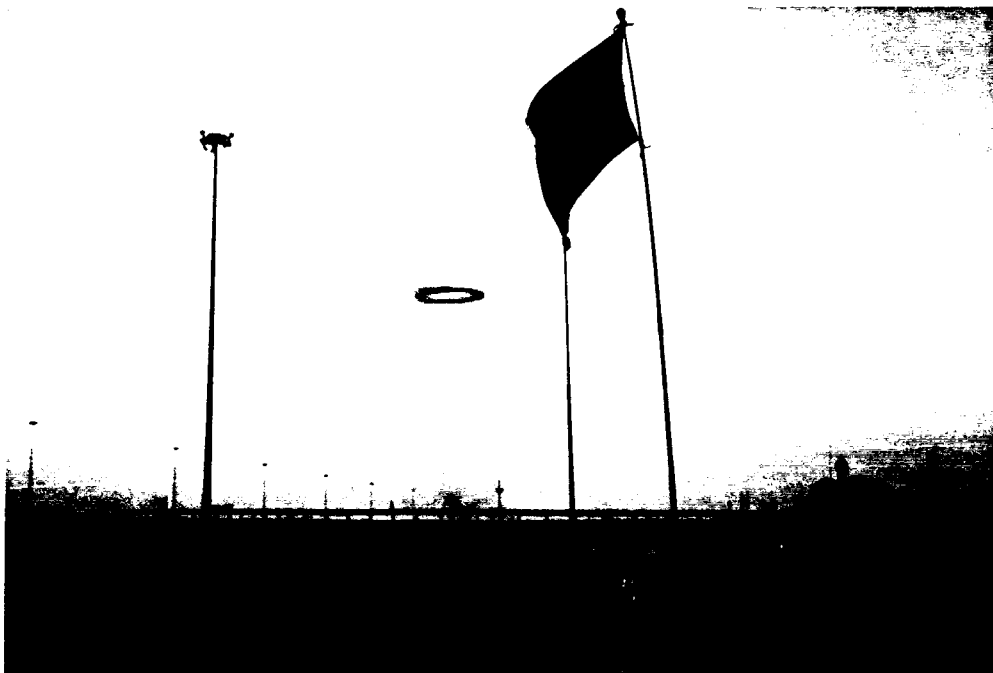
The third occurrence happened on the 10th of March, when a huge stockpile of AT-3 Sagger anti-tank missiles went up a half mile from the TOC. My back was turned from the explosion when the bunker went up. I turned around and could feel the concussion. A huge, black cloud of smoke went up like a small nuclear explosion. Out of the black smoke, AT-3s were going up like Roman candles streaking across the sky. A lone dog was seen running for its life toward the TOC as if he had tripped the explosion. The dog ran past the TOC, across the highway, and east for at least a mile until it disappeared from view.



Soldiers seek cover behind a tank and a berm while the engineers blow a cache of ammunition. Canvas laying on the ground is an old Iraqi tent.



The "halo" from an explosion on the ground. The technique the engineers used to detonate explosives often produced this halo in the air.



Another halo seen from "Checkpoint Charlie."
Note the D Co tank on the entrance ramp. A
halo was a sign to the soldiers it was a
planned demolition by our troops.

The quantities and amounts of ammunition and weapons stored in the area seemed infinite. There was just so much of it. We were on the other side of the Kuwaiti border, and I surmised large stores of materials were kept there to transport forward. This was also true of the supply depot area where the combat trains were located.

I did not mind the soldiers collecting souvenirs. The guidance on souvenirs was very clear cut. What I did object to was the number of soldiers from the rear area coming forward to search through these areas. They came without clearance and

possessed no communications or security other than their individual weapons. At one point, I came across the division band leader going through a building. I asked him to leave the area and reported the incident to brigade. CPT Hall chased a field grade officer out of his area of operations. These soldiers posed a threat to us and to themselves.

On or about the 7th of March, we were asked to check out another area farther east. It was a large farm area with a few buildings and an entire complex of greenhouses. We discovered the greenhouses were used to hide vehicles and ammunition. They provided excellent, natural concealment from aircraft. The number of ammunition caches in the area was too many to count. I sent the engineers back to destroy all of it. The entire area was ringed with anti-aircraft positions and bunkers. The anti-aircraft guns were still in place.



Boxes of Sagger missiles at the greenhouse site.



Boxes of Sagger missiles removed from their storage bunker on the right. A portion of the greenhouse area can be seen in the background.



The greenhouse area. The shaded area under the shelter on the left is actually an underground storage bunker.

Safety was paramount. I did not want soldiers randomly going around detonating things or setting fires. I insisted on command approval at the Company Commander level for any destruction mission and wanted all destruction missions command supervised. In the case of military vehicles, the safest way to complete their destruction was by fire. Some of the combat vehicles and trucks in the area were not catastrophic and were potentially repairable if returned to the Iraqis. I was determined this would never happen.

I gave the gasoline fuel truck to the Mortar Plt Leader, LT Powers. He had the mission of escorting the fuel truck around the area. As he located a military vehicle, he sprayed a few gallons of gasoline over it and set it on fire. He became known as "Torch 6" by all the Company Commanders.

We destroyed so much equipment and ammunition we lost track of how much we actually destroyed. It should suffice to say our destruction operations went on night and day for over two weeks. We saved certain pieces of equipment for intelligence exploitation purposes and sent them to the rear for shipment back to the U.S.

Statement by LT Powers, the Mortar Plt Leader, describing his mission of destroying vehicles and equipment on 7 March 1991:

During our battalion occupation of the town of Safwan, Iraq, I gained a new title as the Mortar Plt Leader. Formerly, I was called "Thumper." I was soon dubbed "Torch 6."

My platoon was located outside Safwan. We pushed into a heavy concentration of supply, ammunition, and maintenance centers for the Iraqi army. While the tank companies had to endure long rehearsals for the peace talks, I had the mission of clearing their positions and destroying all enemy vehicles in the area. We attacked these areas with zeal. We moved in and destroyed around ten to fifteen trucks and jeeps on our first day. Sometimes we would thermite the vehicles; other times, we would punch holes through gas tanks and light them.

We got to the point where we had too many vehicles to destroy. LTC Marlin assigned the Tank and Pump Unit (TPU) to my platoon. We executed our mission by burning jeeps, trucks, tanks, and armored reconnaissance vehicles. We destroyed more vehicles in our expeditions than the entire battalion did during the war. It was also during these operations when I discovered enemy maps and graphics left behind

in a corps headquarters. I will always remember how I became known as "Torch 6."

Battle Damage Assessment

On 5 March, we were asked to send up our BDA. Each Company Commander collected the data from his crew commanders. I was amazed at the amount of destruction we accumulated during the one hundred hour war. I was not a personal witness to all of it. Stories appeared later that I had no knowledge of at the time of their occurrence.

In all, the battalion destroyed sixty-three tanks, fifty armored personnel carriers, fifty-three trucks, and thirty artillery pieces. A more detailed breakdown of small arms and ammunition was sent forward. We captured over one thousand EPWs. This was all in one hundred hours of combat.

We did not count what we destroyed after the cease fire. No one thought to keep track of it and we were never asked to submit a report after the cease fire.

Recovery Operations

CSM Stockton located our positions on 3 March. We broke contact with him after the night refuel on the 26th of February. Like a real trooper, he accepted the mission of recovery I assigned him. I also needed him forward, but I needed an experienced, individually competent leader for one of the most difficult and courageous missions of this war--recovering our lost vehicles and crews separated from us during the one hundred hour war. I was overjoyed to see him arrive safely.

Statement by CSM Stockton, the Battalion Command Sergeant Major, describing some of his vehicle recovery efforts beginning on 24 February 1991:

On the 24th of February, about 1800 hours, I departed the vicinity of PL Colorado for an unknown location in the vicinity of our breach site in search of B11. Darkness had fallen. I had my driver, SPC Daryl A. Swanger, and an M88 and crew with me. We suspected B11 was located some eight to ten kilometers to our rear (south). B11 had no contact with anyone in the battalion.

The unknown location caused us to have to do a complete reconnaissance at night, around the breach site, to find B11. This was rather scary because we knew mine fields and other obstacles were in the area. We got lucky and located B11 in about an hours' search time. Throughout the entire search, our contact with friendly units was impossible. We finally made contact with B11 on the administration and logistics radio net. I was glad the crew was following the planned procedures and was on the radio net.

The tank was not where the Tank Commander told us to look. We were told to look for it on lane M, and the tank was actually in the vicinity of lane P. We recovered the tank and crew and negotiated successfully back to the UMCP by skirting known and suspected mine fields and other obstacles.

Throughout the attack to and through the Republican Guard units, I continuously helped police up downed tank crews. We either fixed them and got them moving, or put them under tow. The recovery effort was non-stop. LTC Marlin was leading from the front, and I was pushing from the back.

As we hit the main highway on 28 February and the cease fire was announced, we realized we were still missing vehicles and crews. After a quick status check and gut check, I departed with one M88 recovery vehicle and two tanks to recover C22 and D12. They were located approximately one hundred kilometers to the southwest of the battalion. We had to travel back through territory still occupied by Iraqi soldiers. The possibility of running into bypassed enemy units was extremely high and dangerous. Our recovery mission was deep into Iraqi territory. Over twenty-four hours of our operation was without established radio communications with battalion and in hours of extreme darkness.

We searched all night on the first night out and could not locate our missing tanks and crews. The next morning, we finally located D12 and discovered C22 was able to self recover. We recovered the tank and crew and linked back up with battalion at Safwan on about 3 March 1991. I found out we still had more vehicles to recover.

Less than twelve hours after arriving at Safwan, I found myself departing with CPT Hodge with two tank engines in the back of a HEMMT and one M88 recovery vehicle. MAJ Garrity and CW3 LeMay had taken two engines out of two serviceable tanks for me to haul back to assist in recovery operations.

We were all disappointed at the lack of assistance being offered by combat support and combat service support units in the area of repair parts and recovery operations. After a two hundred fifty kilometer attack, it was like there was no one behind us. No maintenance collection points existed.

I was to locate the remaining vehicles from the UMCP: one M88, B22, and two other tanks. All were thought to be at different locations. My mission was approximately one hundred fifty kilometers to our rear. This was back through enemy territory a second time during hours of darkness. We found all the vehicles and, after fixing the ones we could, started moving everyone back to Safwan. Midway, LTC Marlin got in contact with us through the retransmission station and told me to take the convoy to RAA Huebner in Saudi Arabia. He sounded relieved at being able to contact us and was impressed with the progress we had made.

We turned south and went through numerous mine fields and old enemy positions. All of our soldiers and vehicles finally entered Saudi Arabia. After taking the vehicles to RAA Huebner, I returned to the battalion at Safwan on 8 March. We accomplished an exceptionally difficult mission with no communication between us and the battalion over an extended distance.

The rain never seemed to stop. We had rain from the 4th of March until the 12th of March. The drainage problem made things worse for travel on the dirt roads and for sanitation. Even in the TOC tent, on a hard stand, we had an inch of pooled water.

I guess MAJ Garrity thought I had slept on my tank enough. He vacated the TOC tent for us. C Co came up with a spare oil heater from one of the Iraqi bunkers. We put it in our sleeping tent. 201st Fwd Spt Bn was now furnishing kerosene for all the oil heaters soldiers confiscated and were using to stay dry and warm. It was chilly constantly. Hot chow was delivered once a day and the steak dinner promised by GEN Schwarzkopf finally showed up.

CSM Stockton managed to bring home several lost tanks and crews from as far back as the breach site. There were still several vehicles and crews unaccounted for. We thought we knew their location and their status. CSM Stockton had information on some of them, but he did not have the capability to recover them. They were also out of communication range. Two of the tanks needed engines; but no engines were available.

The sad truth was no assistance outside the battalion was available for recovery. No recovery or maintenance plan was in effect for the two hundred sixty kilometer attack. I was informed by brigade and division the recovery responsibility was totally mine.

MAJ Garrity, working with CW3 LeMay, made the decision to pull two tank engines from operational tanks at Safwan to recover the two downed tanks. I concurred with their decision. I personally spoke with the crews whose engines we would borrow. What great soldiers! To the man, they understood and were willing to help their fellow soldiers.

On the 4th of March, CSM Stockton and CPT Hodge set out with a convoy of one M88 recovery vehicle, one HEMMT with two tank engines, and the retransmission station. LT Okiyama manned a retransmission station at the halfway point in hopes of maintaining contact with the recovery party. He was alone, in the middle of nowhere, for several days. Contact was sporadic, at best. We lost contact with the recovery party.

For days I sat on my hands wanting to get a status of the recovery effort. Every day I was asked by brigade of their status--questions impossible to answer because of the distance and lack of communications. I arranged for a helicopter to search for them. The helicopter pilot informed me he could not fly the distance because of the wind--not enough fuel for the range. I returned to the gas station. I considered sending out another search party, but that would have compounded the problem. I anguished over the safety of the recovery team and grew tired of brigade's constant, "Where are they?"

On the 5th of March, a breakthrough occurred. CPT Hall used a helicopter to find the recovery team. He was unable to call because he was grounded because of high winds. The retransmission station was able to eventually contact the recovery team and we talked to them through the retransmission station. I informed the recovery team to go south to RAA Huebner. RAA Huebner was the location of our next move. Rather than bring them all the way north, it was easier to link-up with them in the south. CSM Stockton acknowledged and stated he had everyone accounted for and in tow. We relayed through the AM

radio to MAJ Cook at RAA Huebner to look for and link-up with CSM Stockton. Grid locations were passed to all parties. I was relieved all were safe and passed the information on to brigade. The effort on the part of CSM Stockton and LT Okiyama was truly heroic. LT Okiyama returned to the gas station with the retransmission station on 9 March 1991.

Rear Assembly Area Huebner

With the peace negotiations complete, we anticipated a short stay in the Safwan area. Our next move, we hoped, was to RAA Huebner to prepare to go home. In anticipation of this move and as part of a brigade effort, we sent all of our deadlined vehicles to RAA Huebner on HETs. MAJ Cook was in charge of the advance party and our portion of the convoy.

After a few days, we realized we had no communications with the soldiers at RAA Huebner. MAJ Garrity came up with a brilliant plan to use the AM radio from our ALO's vehicle. We sent LT Anderson to RAA Huebner and established AM communications over two hundred miles away. We could now talk to MAJ Cook at RAA Huebner.

Statement by MAJ Cook, the Battalion S3, describing the battalion's advance party movement to RAA Huebner on 8 March 1991:

The advance party for 2nd Bde pulled out from the Safwan gas station escorting HETs with armored vehicles to RAA Huebner. The battalion moved two tanks, one BFV, two M113 APCs, and one M88. Escorting the vehicles were myself, SSG Stephen S. Schiltz (S4 Section), one five-ton cargo truck with vehicle crews, and one tool truck. The convoy pulled to the Division Rear Area (DREAR) and sat for five hours for the HET drivers to get some sleep. The convoy moved for RAA

Huebner at 0330 hours for the DREAR. En route, the convoy passed CSM Stockton just north of the Saudi Arabian village of Hafir al Batin. He was escorting an M88 recovery vehicle pulling one M1 tank toward RAA Huebner. The element closed into RAA Huebner at approximately 1600 hours and down loaded the HETs into unit areas.

For the next four days, the following items were accomplished: two convoys of six lowboys scrounged up latrines and showers, unit areas were set up with bermed boundaries bulldozed by 1st Engr Bn assets; an arms room tent was brought in and set up; maintenance was our number one priority; liaison with 701st Main Spt Bn was established; and the B22 tank was found at the 144 Spt Co boneyard at KKMC.

One tank, B22, never reached RAA Huebner. The HET driver received different instructions because he was from a unit different than the other HET drivers. He took the tank to a boneyard in the 144th Spt Co. The tank was stripped and our soldier was separated from the tank. Although the paperwork was handled correctly later, I was never satisfied with the manner the chain of command treated our soldier and made decisions about the tank without notifying our chain of command. We spent days looking for and worrying about CPL Frank J. Kaminski, Jr. and the B22 tank.

Statement by CPT Martin, the B Co Commander, describing the search for B22 on 8 March 1991:

B22 was considered to be inoperative by its own power or by another tow vehicle. We finally sent B22 south to RAA Huebner via a HET. The tank left the 122nd Main Spt Bn's (3rd Ar Div) area on the 8th of March. CPL Kaminski escorted the vehicle to protect it.

The tank and CPL Kaminski were lost for the next four days. Finally, MAJ Cook found B22 in KKMC's battle damage boneyard. Unfortunately, CPL Kaminski was missing. On 14 March, at 1045 hours, we received

a report from RAA Huebner. CPL Kaminski was at the Division Maintenance and Material Center (DMMC).

CPL Kaminski was ordered to stay with B22 regardless of the circumstances facing him. It took a LTC to separate the soldier from B22. The tank was considered to be a battle loss and was turned in appropriately. The Army logistical system, once again, took matters into its own hands and did not inform our chain of command about the tank turn-in nor the disposition of CPL Kaminski.

Statement by CPT Hall, the Battalion S4, describing his search and negotiations for B22 on 14 March 191:

After B22 was transported halfway around the world, I was told to find B22 and get it off our property books. During the reconnaissance of RAA Huebner, I ran into CPT Michael W. Alexander, HHC Commander from TF 3-37. He told me he saw B22 at KKMC.

I located B22 at the 321st Management and Material Command (MMC). They were responsible for accounting for all damaged vehicles throughout the theater. Amid the piles of damaged vehicles, I found B22. After locating the OIC, the next challenge was to convince the OIC, who was a female National Guard LT, that B22 was damaged in combat. Again, to make a long story short, I told her I had a problem and she was the only person in theater capable of helping me. I told her B22 had to go away (off my property books). I told her B22 had a cracked hull. Since all the track was stripped off, she could not see underneath it, so she had to take my word for it.

But no one is going to do something for nothing, so, after talking to her, I discovered she was sharing a tent (GP small) with four other soldiers and she really wanted her own tent. So I convinced her if she would do this small favor for me and make B22 go away, I would get her a tent. She signed for B22 and I gave her a tent.

MAJ Cook's mission, in addition to moving our broken vehicles and crews to RAA Huebner, was to get the vehicles repaired and to set up the site. With the logistics bases in closer proximity, he had a good chance of getting the repair

parts we did not have access to at Safwan. I sent one maintenance team with him to RAA Huebner. He received the message via the AM radio telling him that CSM Stockton was en route to RAA Huebner.

One day later, MAJ Cook still had not linked up with CSM Stockton and I began to worry again. Brigade continued to ask me hourly if CSM Stockton was in RAA Huebner. The answer was no. I always feared the worst--mine fields or a lone, bypassed enemy T55 tank. On or about 9 March 1991, CSM Stockton linked up with MAJ Cook. I now had CSM Stockton, MAJ Cook, CPT Hodge, and CPT Feeser in RAA Huebner with our deadlined vehicles. I was optimistic about getting them repaired or coded out and replaced. 201st Fwd Spt Bn reported the status of the battalion's vehicles in RAA Huebner on the brink of being repaired. Their reports were positive and upbeat. MAJ Brown, from the 201st Fwd Spt Bn, was personally at RAA Huebner supervising the effort.

I drove to DISCOM on the 14th of March and caught a Blackhawk helicopter ride to RAA Huebner to check on the battalion's personnel. The trip was an all-day affair. I met with CSM Stockton and CPT Feeser at RAA Huebner. No progress was being made in the repair of the vehicles. I was outraged. MAJ Brown was not in the immediate area.

The soldiers at the site were making good progress. Berms were established, marking the boundaries of our battalion's area. MAJ Cook laid out the motor pool, tent, dining, and maintenance areas. CSM Stockton commandeered a truck and went

back to TAA Roosevelt to recover our old latrines and showers. They had procured picnic tables from somewhere for the dining area. All in all, the soldiers had it pretty good in RAA Huebner.

I returned to Safwan. I was upset over the lack of maintenance support in RAA Huebner. This was compounded by the continuing lack of maintenance support at Safwan. As soon as I returned, I went to the 201st Fwd Spt Bn to speak to LTC Hand. He was not present. I spoke with his XO about the true maintenance status in RAA Huebner.

Maintenance

We had fifty operational tanks out of fifty-eighty tanks, six out of six BFVs, and eight out of eight mortar tracks in the battalion available when we seized Safwan on 1 March 1991. This was after more than three hundred miles of rehearsals in TAA Roosevelt with little or no repair part support and attacking over two hundred sixty kilometers in four days with little or no maintenance stops. Our wheel maintenance operational rate was the best of any battalion in the division.

At Safwan, I returned to reporting our maintenance status by the book. I sometimes wondered if we were the only battalion insisting on by-the-book reporting. To do anything less would be criminal. We seemed to be doing more and getting less. By the book, we deadlined over twenty combat vehicles for a number of reasons. Eight of these vehicles were located at RAA Huebner. All of them required repair parts. Some of them were

being reported deadlined for the same repair part they needed the day we put them on the train. I informed MG Rhame when he visited that I had at least sixteen tanks I could carry as deadline for track. His guidance before leaving Ft. Riley was to ensure that all our tanks had at least five hundred miles of track life. Ft. Riley was six hundred miles ago.

After our arrival in Safwan, we continued to pull excellent maintenance. Crews did exemplary things above and beyond operator level maintenance. The Maintenance Plt found a battery factory and several captured M113 APCs. We stripped and used almost everything but the hull from these vehicles. SFC Martindale of the Wheel Maintenance Team performed miracles. We had over fourteen Soviet made tires on our two and one-half ton truck fleet because we could not get tires from the system. He modified Soviet truck fuel pumps and brake lines to fit our trucks to keep them running. Tank crews cut V pack seals from other materials because the seals never arrived, despite the promises since Ft. Riley.

I was proud of the maintenance effort and made a conscious effort to develop a positive maintenance attitude about our efforts regardless of other's perceptions. I took the positive approach with my commanders and encouraged them to do more. I praised our soldiers for their efforts. I sent MAJ Garrity out looking for parts and contacted old friends to see what we could scrounge.

MG Rhame Visits the Gas Station

MG Rhame came to our TOC location at the gas station to congratulate the soldiers. We gathered four soldiers from each platoon and all the key leaders to hear him speak. He was really proud of all of us. He told the soldiers of their achievements and accomplishments. He wanted to make sure every soldier in the division realized the significant contributions they had made in one of the most impressive victories in U.S. Army history.

Interpreter's Family Visit

MAJ Garrity was a blessing. At times, I would get very depressed over certain aspects of the battalion and he was always there to remind me--we won. I really appreciated his hard-charging attitude and his "Let's get on with it," no nonsense approach to business." Several times, he made decisions without consulting me. They were always the right decisions; I just reminded him to consult me before the decision, not after. I was fortunate to have him as the XO.

MAJ Garrity took Mohammed Rammadhad to visit his family in Kuwait. This was a real success story. His family was safe and sound. He had not seen them in three years. They had a large feast and MAJ Garrity joined them. He returned from Kuwait to share his experience with the commanders and staff and made everyone feel good about the success of their mission. Rammadhad was indebted to us for taking him to his family.

Our other interpreter, Abdul Mohsin Faray Alqatani was sent to TF 2-16. I informed LTC Fake of our interpreter's visit and suggested he have Alqatani visit his family.

Back to the United States

We received the mission to send eight soldiers back to Ft. Riley as an advance victory party. They were to tell everyone we were okay and things were going well. I put LT Jerrells in charge of the group. The mission stated that the soldiers have all their personal equipment. These were the only eight soldiers we could find who still had both their duffel bags at Safwan. The rest of our soldiers stored their duffel bags in the MILVANS prior to G-day.

As it turned out, two of the soldiers chosen had pregnant wives, and SPC Raymond E, Heckman, Jr.'s wife had given birth since his departure. They departed the next morning, 9 March, and returned to a hero's welcome at Ft. Riley. My mistake was in not sending at least one soldier from each company. I did not realize the significance or purpose of the mission. SPC Heckman appeared on CNN news with his new son and later appeared on the "Good Morning America" show with his wife.

Refugees

The number of refugees continued to increase. People continued to beg for water and food or medical care. All were referred to the Red Cross station adjacent to the gas station. A large camp grew around the Red Cross station. People lived in large tents and automobiles.

Many of the refugees were armed with small arm weapons. At night, bursts of machine gun fire cut the night air with tracers. They made us very nervous and we continued to stay very security conscious. Our policy of no assistance reinforced our security, because they declined to approach us when they realized the answer was "no."

Statement by CPT Torrence, the C Co Commander, describing life at Safwan on 7 March 1991:

During this time, C Co had acquired an old Iraqi mobile command post. It resembled a train boxcar on wheels and we towed it into our perimeter with the FIST vehicle. We cleaned it out and used it as "the house." One platoon would rotate out of the perimeter each day and was able to use "the house." We also made a makeshift shower point and a latrine. A captured Iraqi water buffalo (trailer) enabled us to keep a large supply of potable water to do laundry and personal hygiene. We also set up a volleyball net with equipment provided by LT Lee from D Co.

After two months of living off a tank, this was like a hotel to our soldiers. Soldiers living in tents cannot appreciate the stiffness, pain, and discomfort of sleeping, eating, and living on a hard, sixty-ton combat vehicle. I had no pity for some rear echelon soldier complaining about their tent blowing down or their cot being stolen.

Dud munitions, weapons, and ammunition continued to be a problem. At one time we had to confiscate and destroy weapons being collected by civilians. They had been test firing PRG 7s and we began considering most civilians as dangerous.

A Co had three family members trigger a mine in their sector. One small child was injured and the man was killed outright. A MEDAVAC was called in to assist the small girl. We did all we could. Three days later, the mother of the child asked where her daughter was located. We attempted to find out.

After a period of days, with the help of our interpreter, we located the information and helped the mother find her daughter. It was a very sad situation.

The soldiers were nervous about people moving back into the town. When it was vacant, we had no problems. As people returned, we saw civilians carrying weapons. At night time, a soldier did not know if the activity behind him, on the inside of the perimeter, was an American soldier, a refugee, or an Iraqi soldier. We were ready to leave as soon as they would let us depart.

Awards

We received our initial guidance on awards. Brigade wanted us to get our submissions together. This was a new experience for all of us. I had CPT Loche dig out the regulations and give a small class to all the commanders. Based on brigade's guidance, we submitted four hundred soldiers for the Bronze Star Service Medal for service, fifty-six soldiers for the BSM for valor, and one hundred and fifty soldiers for Army Commendation Medal (ARCOM) for valor. In addition, all of the mortarmen, except LT Powers, was recommended for the Combat Infantryman's Badge (CIB). All of the medics were recommended for the Combat Medical Badge (CMB).

I was satisfied that all the soldiers were deserving of the awards. COL Moreno's guidance was to be generous and fair. He was satisfied with our initial recommendations.

Holding the Line of Demarcation

The Iraqi army was sending soldiers over the line of demarcation with the sole purpose of recovering equipment and ammunition. On 10 March 1991, I received a mission from brigade to send a tank force down the main highway to push them back. The Iraqis had gone so far as to establish a road block on the highway on our side of the line of demarcation. I was assisted by MAJ Bernard J. Dunn, a VII Corps liaison officer and foreign area officer.

I issued the OPORD to my commanders at night and we did a talk-through for a rehearsal. This was not a difficult maneuver, but it was a sensitive issue.

On 10 March, we moved east along the main highway to clear and re-establish the line of demarcation. I had COL Moreno, BG Carter, COL Mowery, LTC Gingrich, LTC Wilson, COL Michael L. Dodson, the DIVARTY Commander, and my eventual replacement, LTC Westholm in my TOC to assist me in doing a two tank company operation. I was not lacking for supervision. It was almost humorous. I was glad I was leaving for the battlefield instead of staying in the TOC. MAJ Garrity was joking about getting coffee and doughnuts for everyone. We departed our perimeter positions at 0600 hours. I stayed on my tank and took the Command Group with me.

D Co held ground at "Checkpoint Charlie" and B Co stayed tied into the perimeter with TF 2-16. We moved on line, abreast, with C Co on the north flank and A Co on the south

flank. The Mortar Plt trailed A Co. I trailed A Co. A Co had one mine field scare, but it turned out to be false.

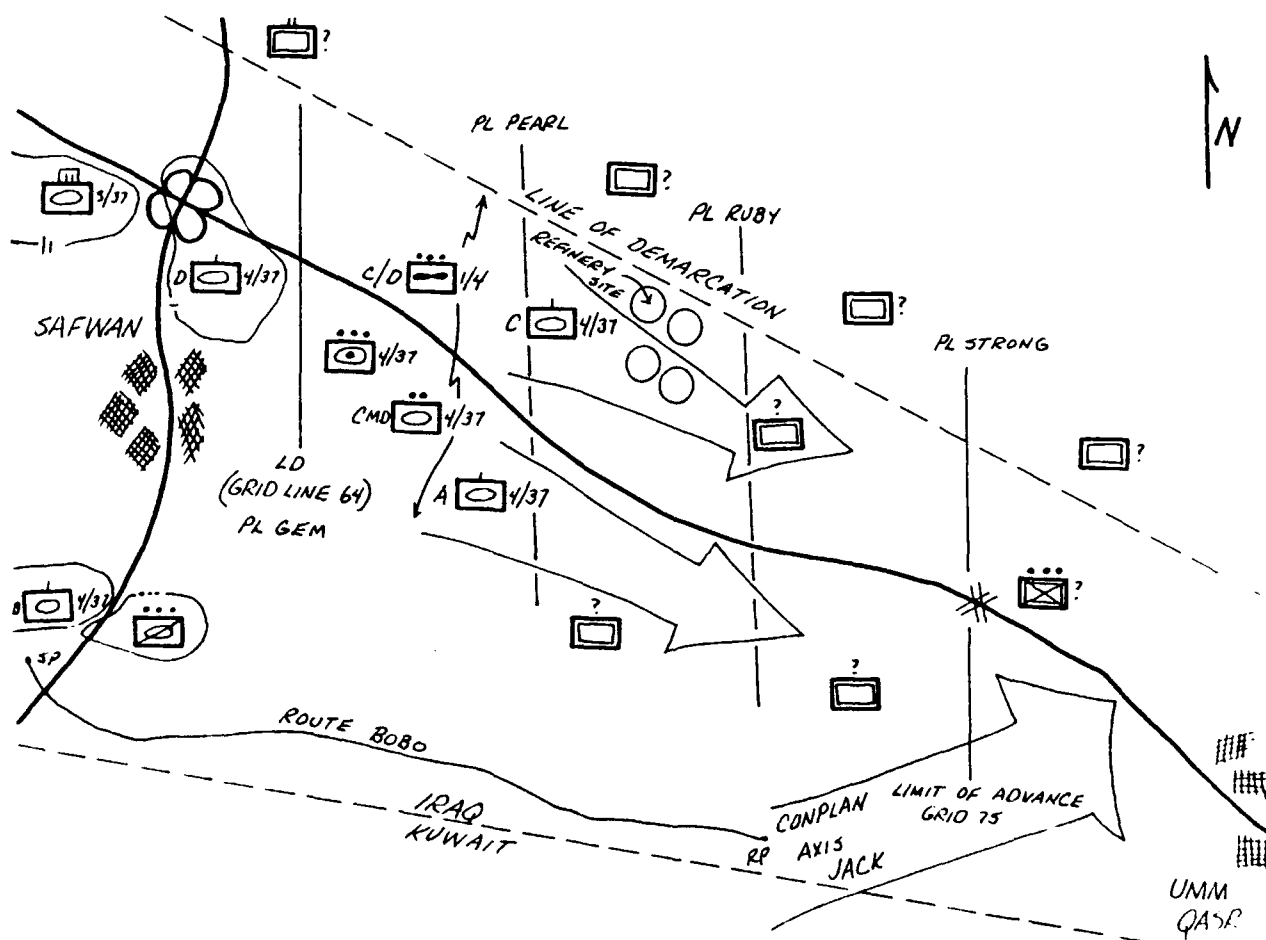
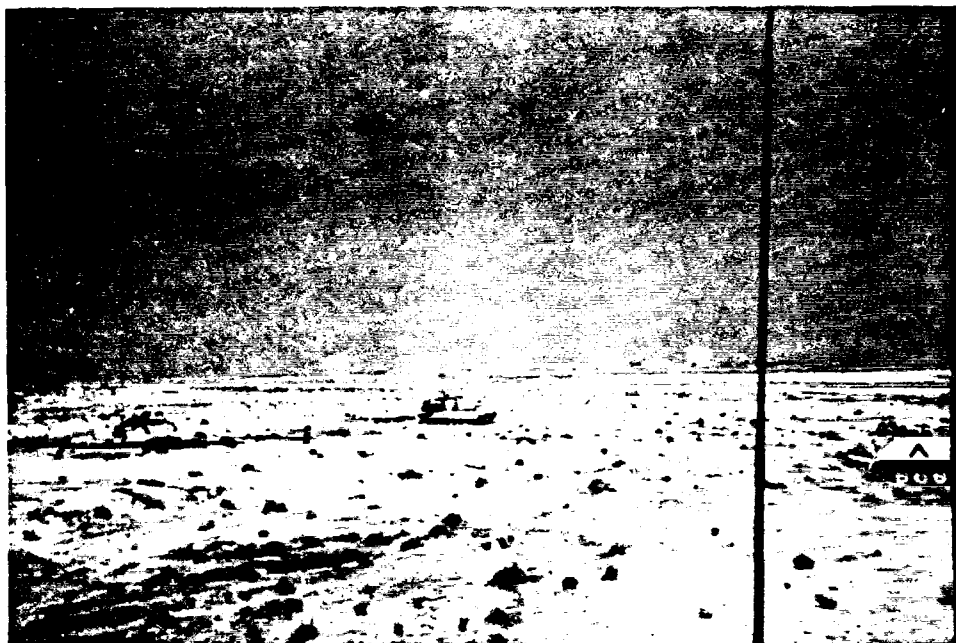


Diagram #51. Clearing the Line of Demarcation.



C Co on the north side of the highway. The actual line of demarcation is in the vicinity of the storage tanks in the background.

Despite a lot of irregular terrain, we eventually reached our designated limit of advance at the north-south grid line seventy-five. I had two attack Cobra helicopters and an OH-58 searching to our flanks and forward. They provided us early warning on the flanks and were giving me intelligence forward. They stayed on my battalion communications net. When their fuel ran out, a new team replaced them. They were from C and D Troops (Trp), 1st Sqdn, 4th Cav.

At the stop point, MAJ Dunn went forward to negotiate and explain our position. The Mortar Plt continued setting

equipment on fire with the gasoline fueler and the engineers continued blowing ammunition in place. MAJ Dunn explained and re-explained the line of demarcation and the terms of the cease fire. It took hours for the right senior Iraqi official to get involved. We finally ceased burning and exploding ammunition during these negotiations. The Iraqis did not seem to understand there was a line of demarcation and thought we were wrong for blowing up their equipment.

The talks went back and forth for over six hours. Eventually, they were given an ultimatum--move it or lose it. We informed them to get all their personnel back on their side of the line or they would become EPWs. At 1800 hours, we would begin blowing up ammunition and equipment again. We refueled and had all the fuel trucks clear of the area by 1800 hours. At 1800 hours, all the pre-set charges set throughout the day were detonated. This continued throughout the night.

Statement by CPT Wock, the D Co Commander, describing activities at "Checkpoint Charlie" during the line of demarcation clearing operation on 11 March 1991:

On 11 March 1991 at 1600 hours, I received a radio call from MAJ Garrity, the Battalion XO, demanding to know whether I had changed the positions of any of my platoons. I replied that my platoons had not moved. Around 1630 hours, MAJ Garrity called again and asked in a suspicious tone of voice whether I had moved my platoons. Again, I replied, "Negative." Around 1700 hours, MAJ Garrity called me again. He was still asking the same question, but the downright accusatory tone of his voice belied his suspicions. Irritated, I replied that all of my tanks were in the exact same positions as the previous day. He said, "Then you need to go to the bridge at the negotiations site and find out what is going on. Someone from the VII Corps cell keeps insisting your tanks have moved."

I called LT Cook and asked him if he had moved any of his tanks around on top of the bridge. He replied, "Negative." I knew immediately what the problem was. C Co was ordered a few days earlier to supply two tanks to secure the negotiations tent. The tent was about one hundred meters from my tank platoon. Nevertheless, C Co had previously sent two tanks to occupy the on-ramps on the north side of the bridge just fifty meters in front of my Tank Platoon. On this day, C Co executed a show of force in the vicinity of Umm Qasr and withdrew their two tanks.

I went to the negotiations tent and spoke with a non-tanking major from VII Corps. He claimed the battalion owed him two tanks to secure the negotiations site. It became clear to me that he had no grasp as to the capabilities and firepower of the Tank Platoon one hundred meters to his rear. All he knew was that he did not see the gun tubes of two M1 tanks practically poking into his tent, so he felt insecure. I relayed this information to MAJ Garrity and he told me to take no further action on the matter that evening. The next day, MAJ Garrity apparently was ordered to correct the situation, for he ordered me to supply an additional two tanks to assume the two positions on the on-ramps. I moved two tanks to those locations shortly thereafter.

I summoned B Co to join us. CPT Martin brought his company down the road and stayed in the rear as our reserve. As darkness began to fall, I put the three tank companies and the Mortar Plt into a very tight lager in the vicinity of the main highway.

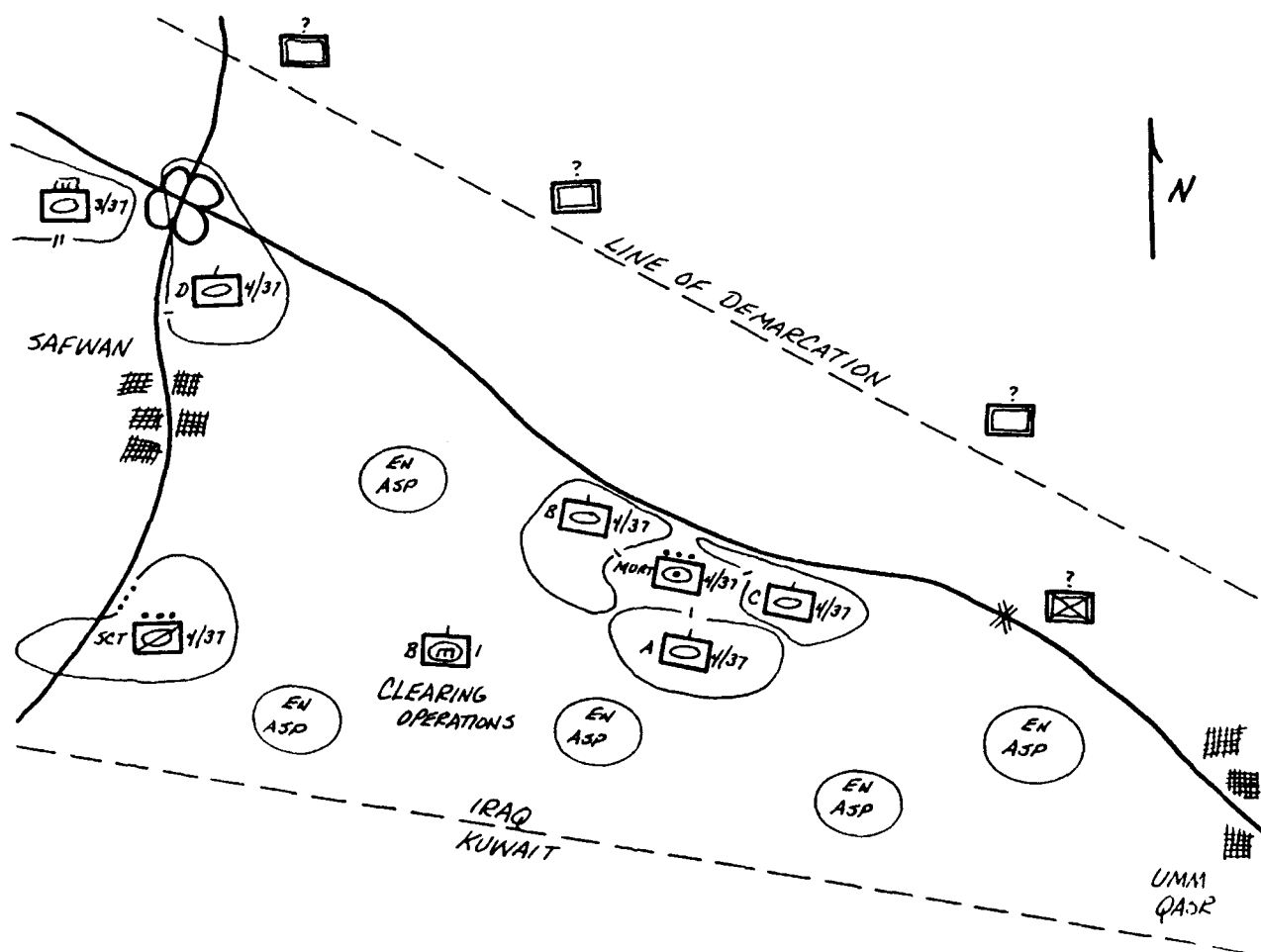
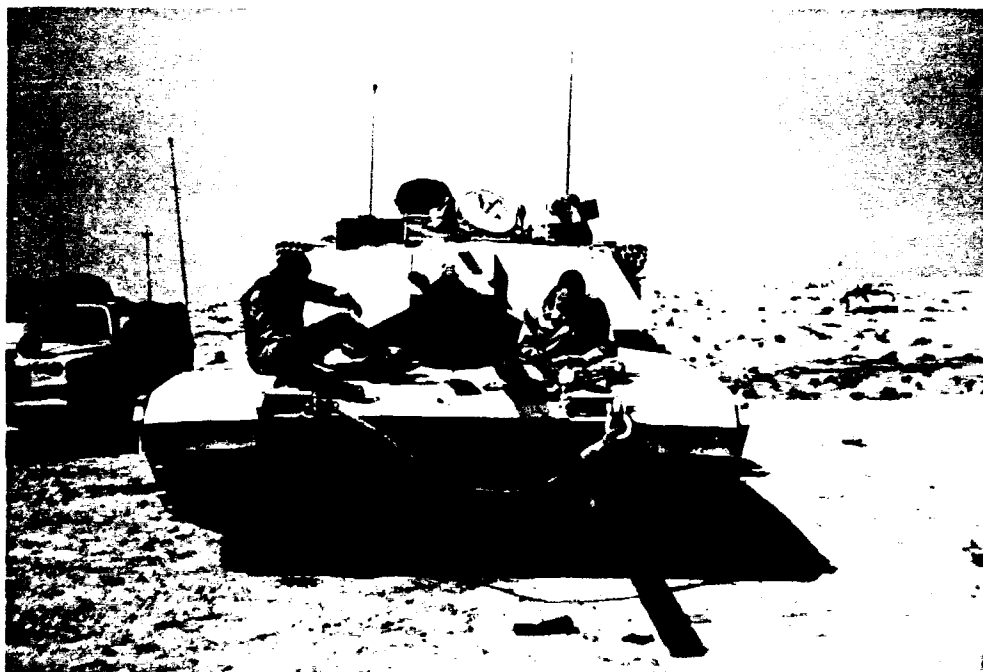


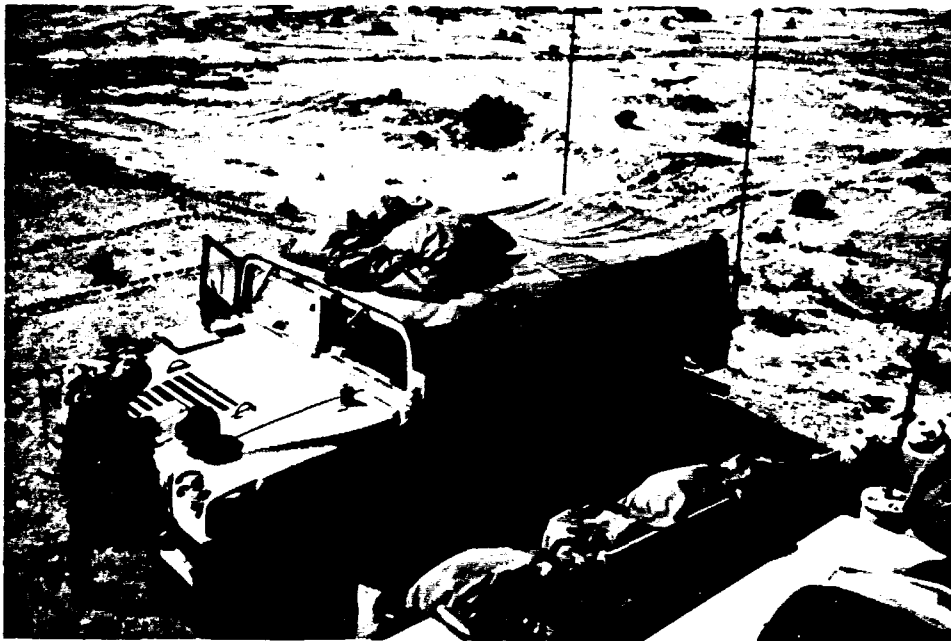
Diagram #52. Line of Demarcation Lager.



SSG Evans and SPC Goforth take a break on the line of demarcation during a lull in the negotiations.



CPT Torrence and his crew on the line of demarcation.



MAJ Dunn going over his notes after returning from the negotiations with the Iraqis. He was awaiting their response.

In the hours of darkness, LT Powers called to inform me that he had an Iraqi general and another senior Iraqi official at his location. They wanted to talk to me. I linked up with them on the highway. A Republican Guard BG and a colonel in a civilian sedan wanted to protest the explosions in the area. My interpreter, Rammadhad, translated. They felt we should ask their permission before setting off detonations for fear of injuring bystanders (Iraqi soldiers crossing the line of demarcation illegally). Rammadhad looked them in the eye (there was no love lost between them) and pointed to the burning oil

wells lighting up the night and calmly said, "You didn't ask our permission for this either." I told the two officers I would escort them to the peace tent at "Checkpoint Charlie."

I informed brigade of my dilemma and was instructed to send them to the peace tent at 0730 hours the next morning. I told them to wait until tomorrow. They were not happy about the delay. Overall, it was not a good night. We had Iraqi soldiers around us all night. We kept a tight lager with good security. We withdrew back to our perimeter on or about 1600 hours on 12 March. We made it clear we intended to defend the line of demarcation.

We destroyed a significant number of vehicles in front of the Iraqis with gasoline and thermite grenades. At one point, about twelve Iraqis drove up in a four wheel drive vehicle to recover an armored track vehicle. I asked COL Moreno if it was okay to drive my tank over their four wheel drive truck. He would not give me permission, but it was a nice thought and would have been very convincing. I did not allow them to recover the Iraqi vehicle.

Umm Qasr Mission

On the night of 12 March, I received short-fuse instructions. Send a Tank Company to police station south of Umm Qasr. Secure the area around the police station. I assigned the mission to CPT Torrence. He reported to the TOC and I briefed him. I assigned the Mortar Plt and two fuel HEMMTs with him. LT Okiyama was also assigned to him for

retransmissions, if it became necessary. I informed D and A Cos to adjust their perimeters to fill the gap left by C Co's absence. CPT Torrence left to brief his company and to get them organized. His LD time was 2000 hours. COL Moreno showed up at the TOC and I briefed him on our plan. He informed us we would move out of these positions tomorrow and it looked as if it would be a while before we ever saw RAA Huebner.

Statement by CPT Torrence, the C Co Commander, describing his assault on the police station south of Umm Qasr on 12 March 1991:

On the night of the 11th of March, 1991, at approximately 1830 hours, I was called to the TOC and given the mission to move to and seize a police station just south of Umm Qasr. The brigade was given the mission by division. The SP was originally 1900 hours; however, because we had just closed from a previous mission, we departed at 2030 hours.

The Company and Mortar Plt moved in a column along the road system to the southeast, then directly east along a high power line. The road march was approximately twenty-five kilometers and we arrived without incident around 2400 hours. The road march was made at dark with "white light." We moved with our headlights on because I was afraid of bumping into another force (unfriendly Iraqis) in the dark. Because of the cease fire and the reports of enemy with heavy equipment in the area, I wanted everyone to know we were arriving in force.

During the march, we noticed electrical lights just north of the objective. The site turned out to be the storage site for the Chinese Silkworm missiles. At the police station, we occupied a tight company AA.

We also carried our own fuel HEMMTs. The Mortar Plt was dropped off three kilometers west of our position in an enemy ASP. On the morning of the 12th, we cleared the surrounding area, finding destroyed recovery vehicles and one T59 tank. We also discovered a PT boat nine hundred meters from our position. It was beached due to low tide. We planned to recover the boat and christen it "Certain Death," however, we were told by BG Carter, who landed shortly

before the recovery, that there was a mine field around the boat. We then destroyed the only boat captured by the VII Corps, with direct tank fire, at approximately 1130 hours.

At 1200 hours, D Co, 3rd Bde, arrived and relieved C Co in place. We moved back to the TOC at 1230 hours and continued the move to a new AA northwest of Safwan. The 3rd Bde recovered the Silkworm missiles. By this time, I had earned the title of Admiral Torrence. I ended up being the butt of a few jokes within the battalion for the next few days.

Statement by LT Powers, the Mortar Plt Leader, describing the Mortar Plt's participation in the police station seizure on 12 March 1991:

After completing the sweep south of the demarcation line to drive Iraqi soldiers north of the line, we moved back to our original positions around Safwan, arriving in position around 1730 hours.

About 1745 hours, MAJ Cook, the Battalion S3, called down and told us to go to REDCON 2 and be prepared to move to grid QU 848211, a police station south of Umm Qasr, to prevent an Iraqi violation of the truce agreement and to send CPT Torrence to the TOC for more guidance.

At 1815 hours, C Co linked up with CPT Torrence, the Mortar Plt, and two fuel HEMMTs in the vicinity of the TOC. At 1900 hours, the task organization was C Company: fourteen M1 tanks, one M88, one maintenance M113 APC, one Medical Plt M113 APC, two HMMWVs; and the Mortar Plt: six M113 APC gun tracks, two Fire Direction Control (FDC) trailers, two HMMWVs, and LT Okiyama with his HMMWV for a retransmission station.

Two minutes into the move, one mortar FDC fell out of the road march with engine problems. We used a power line for navigation. The Mortar Plt and LT Okiyama dropped off at grid QU 810220. C Co continued to the police station and set up in a coil formation at 2400 hours after refueling. Nothing eventful happened on the road march. Stand to was at 0500 hours, 13 March 1991. Because of problems with the retransmission station, LT Weiner moved to the Mortar Plt location to maintain communications in the local area. We reported no enemy contact except for a beached PT boat.

Around 0800 hours, the ADC (M), BG Carter, flew in and talked to CPT Torrence. He said that 3rd Bde should be there by 1200-1300 hours to relieve us. About 0900 hours, CPT Torrence informed him of his plan to tow the PT boat back to our perimeter. BG Carter flew off and returned about 0930 to tell CPT Torrence the terrain would not enable a tank to move and tow the boat, and to shoot it with the tank's main gun.

CPT Torrence called LT Sullivan, on C31, and told him to shoot the boat. The first round was sabot and hit low on the hull. Because there was no explosion, BG Carter said to shoot it again. CPT Torrence told C31 to fire a HEAT round. The demolition effect was created with numerous secondary explosions. The spot report was received by LT Weiner to send to the TOC.

After discussion with LT Okiyama, it was decided not to mention BG Carter giving permission to fire. The TOC received the report at 0945 hours with a "Roger, good copy, out." Then Thunder Five, MAJ Garrity, went haywire. "You shot what? Why? Were there Iraqi soldiers around? Thunder Six, did you hear Certain's report?" After a couple of minutes of discussion and laughter on our end, we informed Thunder Five that BG Carter had given permission to fire. Several minutes of jokes about Admiral Torrence and his fleet followed.

At 1030 hours, 3rd Bn, 66th Ar, arrived to relieve C Co. At 1100 hours, C Co departed for the new AA with the battalion. We guided off the power lines, linked with the Mortar Plt, LT Weiner, and LT Okiyama and road marched to the battalion AA. We arrived about 1500 hours and took up our position on the perimeter.

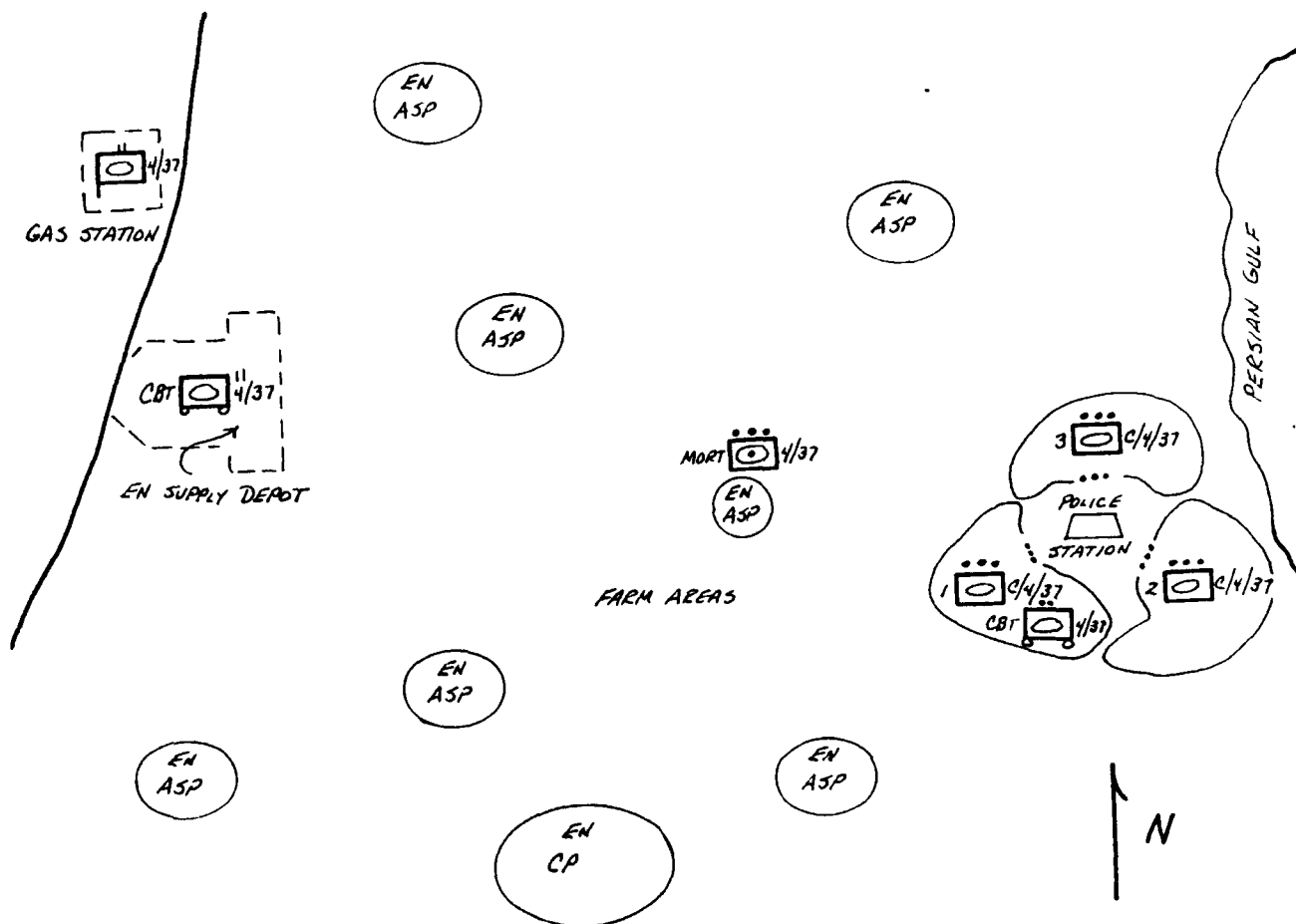


Diagram #53. Police Station Seizure.

CHAPTER 15

STABILITY OPERATIONS

14 MARCH 1991 - 19 MARCH 1991

Moving out of Safwan

C Co was executing its assigned mission south of Umm Qasr when the battalion received the order to move. The move itself was very simple. We repositioned northwest of Safwan and due north of the airstrip. Our instructions were to go into a tight battalion lager. Our priorities of mission were maintenance and recovery. We set up a perimeter with the tank companies. The Mortar Plt, Scout Plt, and combat trains all occupied positions within walking distance of the center.

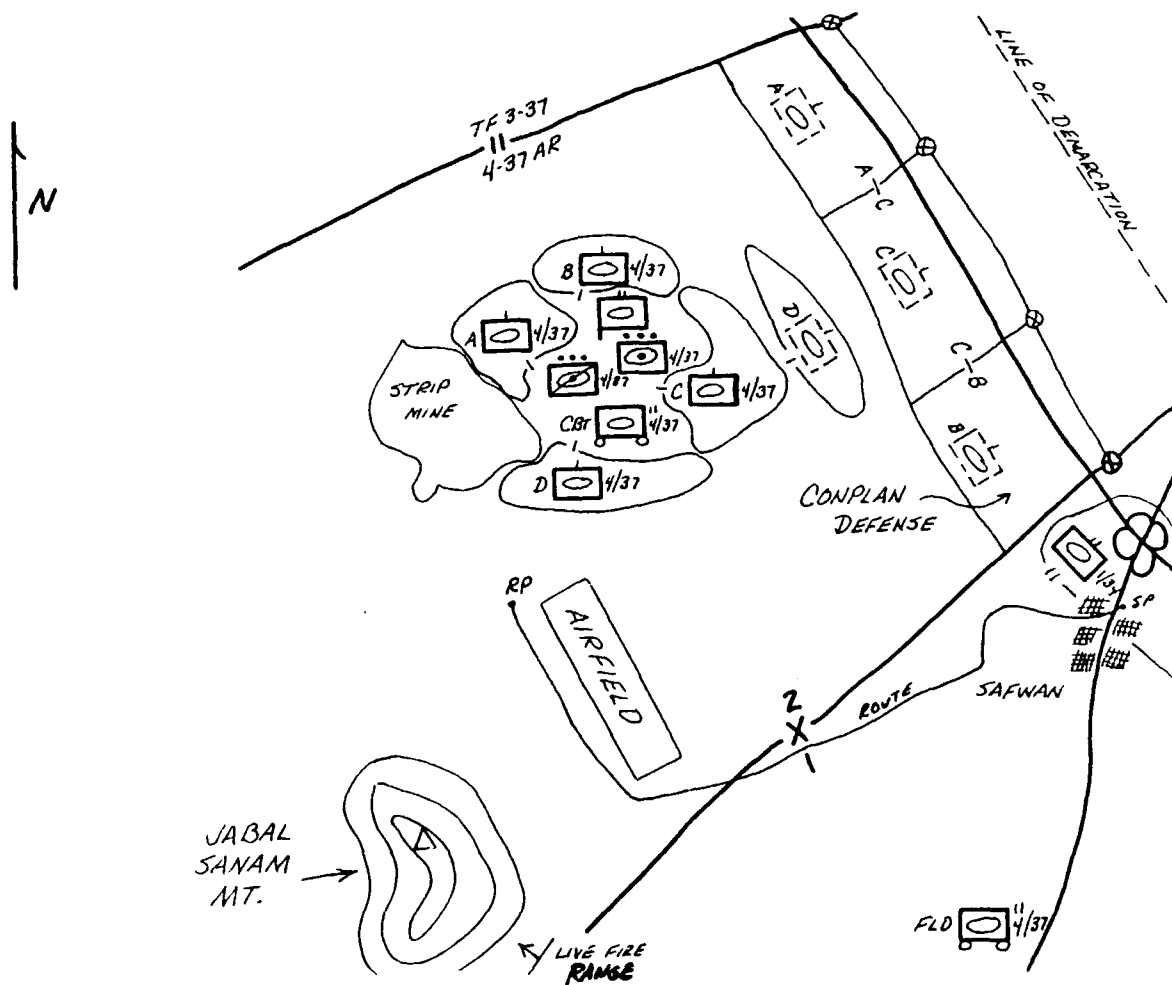


Diagram #54. Battalion Perimeter Northwest of Safwan.

Statement by MAJ Cook, the Battalion S3, describing the move to a new position northwest of Safwan on 13 March 1991:

On 13 March 1991, at 0600 hours, the battalion moved quartering parties forward to do a reconnaissance of the new positions for the battalion. The route of march was north through Safwan, west and back south along the highway, and then to the airfield via the route taken by the peace delegates ten days earlier.

The movement was uneventful except for the location changes made by brigade en route. SP for the main body was 0800 hours. Elements closed on the new AA with Battle [B Co], Death [D Co], TOC, Scout Plt, Mortar Plt, Ace [A Co], and the ALOC/UMCP setting in the morning, and Certain [C Co] by mid-afternoon.

The area was beset with all types of cluster mines, unexploded Iraqi munitions, and weapon systems. Walking in the area was hazardous. No vehicle movement was allowed after dark.

Statement by CPT Beals, the A Co Commander, describing the new position northwest of Safwan on 3 March 1991:

We left the Safwan area with high spirits. Most of the soldiers in A Co were glad to get away from the town. Guarding the airfield and town for the peace talks had a negative side. Mainly, the number of dogs running through the area presented a serious health problem compounded by large numbers of flies and mosquitoes. Additionally, all the soldiers were pestered by the local inhabitants and refugees for MREs and food. It was very common for refugees to show up and wait at LOGPAC, only to walk away as we packed up the food and sent the two and one-half ton truck to the BSA.

Events such as these required us to initiate strict guidelines for our soldiers' behavior in towns around the civilian population. No food, water, or medical aid was to be given to the local civilians. A Red Cross/Crescent area was set up just south of the TOC's location. We tried to send everyone there. However, vehicles stopping in the area were usually swamped by beggars, especially those with water trailers.

No pets were allowed. Tank crews adopted dogs to help run off other packs of dogs. These dogs were

suspected of diseases, especially rabies. We had to run them off to clear the area. We still had large packs of dogs roaming the area for food every night.

The sight I remember most was the Iraqi kids lining the road out of town, rushing up to stopped vehicles to beg for food. MREs became a popular meal for the local civilians.

Once clear of the town, we were able to relax a little bit just because there were fewer non-combatants in the area.

Statement by CPT Loche, the Battalion Adjutant, describing the occupation of the battalion's new position northwest of Safwan on 13 March 1991:

The combat trains were on the move again. This time they moved from the south of Safwan, where the battalion secured the cease fire negotiations site, to the northwest of Safwan to secure the demarcation line.

The trains moved in its usual formation: the CP, the BSA, the UMCP tracks, and finally the UMCP wheeled vehicles. As usual, the guidance was given to follow in the tracks of the vehicle in front of you. The march was completed without incident.

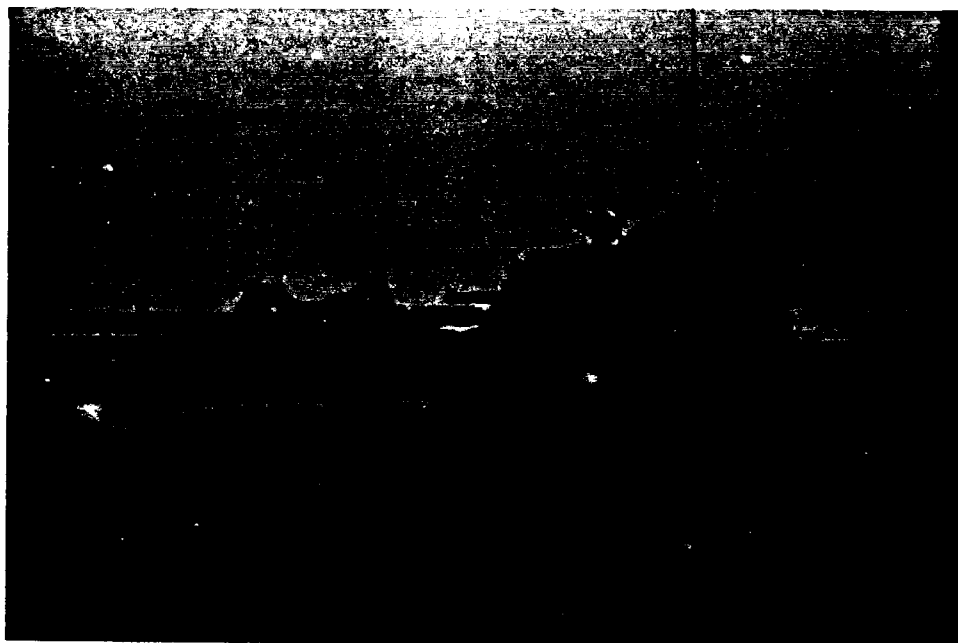
As the trains pulled into position on the south side of a post-west roadway, CPT Hodge and I dismounted to discuss the combat trains' layout. The trains continued to arrive and were pre-placed under the supervision of the BMO. The CP completed the march and was emplaced. The BSA arrived and immediately began to set up. Several M88s and maintenance M113 APCs completed the trip along the exact same route.

Then came SFC Ingram, SSG Ae J. Ae, the two and one-half ton trucks, and HQ 77. Riding in the tracks of the front vehicles was simply not good enough for an M109 van with visions of being a CEV. HQ 77 decided to break trail. It boldly went forth where no vehicle had gone before. BOOM! Drawn to the CBU like a magnet, the cab of HQ 77 was engulfed in smoke. Being no ordinary truck, and manned by no ordinary crew, HQ 77 continued to roll. The earth-shattering boom reached LTC Marlin as he sat in the TC's hatch of his tank. He immediately keyed his radio microphone and demanded to know what was going on. The response he got from me was, "A truck just ran over a bomb;

everything is okay; no one is hurt." HQ 77 died as it pulled into position--its fuel tank riddled with holes, its undercarriage blackened and mangled. SFC Ingram, cigar firmly clenched between his teeth, calmly stepped out of the cab and asked where to park.

Statement by CPT Clidas, the HHC Commander, describing the brigade support area's decision not to move on 13 March 1991:

On the evening of 12 March, the BSA was alerted by 201st Fwd Spt Bn to move at 0700 hours to new positions. Preparations for the move began at 2300 hours on 12 March 1991 and continued throughout the night. At 0400 hours on the morning of the proposed move, all tents were struck. At 0655 hours, the move was canceled by the 201st Fwd Spt Bn. They felt they would be able to support the brigade from the present BSA, even though the brigade had moved forward.



LTC Marlin's tank in the center of the perimeter. We still set up camouflage nets and positioned the combat vehicles in fighting positions.

The area was littered with unexploded CBUs. As I came into the area, I alerted all the companies on the radio to be careful. As we found these items, we notified brigade and they sent the engineers around to detonate them.

The Local Civilians

Iraqi civilians seemed to be everywhere. When we left Safwan, all the soldiers seemed relieved to be out of the area. I certainly was. The local farmers in the area were always wanting to borrow gasoline or diesel. We stuck to our policy of no assistance unless life threatening. The soldiers seemed to take to the kids, so we had to enforce our policy of no assistance. We did not want to create our own problems. We were always careful to burn all of our trash and to bury non-combustible things we had no intention of keeping. We kept our area clean and sanitary.



A few of the Iraqi children in the area.
They picked up everything we dropped.

I caught a D Co tank crew trading MRE leftovers with a family of Iraqi farmers. The farmers were giving the soldiers tomatoes from their fields. I chewed them out. When I asked them why they continued to do this after CPT Wock had told them not to, the answer was the simple, "We felt sorry for them." I, too, was sympathetic, but I realized if we wanted to draw a crowd, simply feed one of them.

Statement by CPT Wock, the D Co Commander, describing the Iraqis approaching him and asking for assistance on 14 March 1991:

At 1530 hours, D Co's LOGPAC, consisting of one supply truck with water trailers and two fuel HEMMTs, had almost completed its daily mission of re-supplying

the company with water, food, and fuel. The LOGPAC personnel had only to dig a pit to burn the trash from the re-supply activity prior to returning to the BSA.

Suddenly, a beat-up late-model white Toyota truck pulled into the LOGPAC area. An Arab jumped out of the driver's side of the vehicle and grabbed a five gallon can out of the truck bed. He looked at SGT Stephen I. Lee, the D Co supply sergeant, and asked, "Gauss? Gauss?" The Toyota truck was parked one hundred meters away from the supply truck and it was hard to hear what the Iraqi wanted. SGT Lee thought the Iraqi wanted water and motioned the Iraqi to come to the supply truck. Gleefully, the Iraqi driver began walking over to the supply truck.

Immediately I was suspicious of what was going on. I asked SGT Lee, "Why are you motioning him over here?" SGT Lee replied, "Sir, all he wants is some water and I have plenty."

About this time, a second Iraqi man emerged from the Toyota truck and began to happily roll an empty fifty-five gallon drum off the truck. Seeing as how I did not suffer from the same hearing impairment as my supply sergeant, I informed SGT Lee, "They do not want water. They want gas!" So SGT Lee asked the first Iraqi what he wanted. The Iraqi smiled a wide, partially toothless grin and queried, "Gauss! Gauss!" Habib had finished rolling the barrel off the truck and began rolling it toward us. It took SGT Lee another five minutes to convince these two Iraqis they would not get any fuel from us. The two Iraqis repacked their Toyota and left the battalion area of operations.

Statement by CPT Clidas, the HHC Commander, describing Iraqis attempting to get food from passing vehicles on or about 13 March 1991:

Throughout the period from 13 to 20 March, the battalion field trains were located with the BSA south of Safwan. The battalion was located approximately fifteen kilometers to the northwest. The daily LOGPAC convoy from the BSA took a route passing numerous refugees and local children who were begging along the side of the road.

Initially, the children (who ranged in age from three to eighteen years of age) merely held out their hands as vehicles passed them. As time progressed, they became more and more aggressive. They would

frequently stand in the middle of the road, daring the drivers to run them over. Some even moved unexploded ordinance or fragments onto the road in an attempt to get the convoys to stop. As a vehicle slowed to avoid such obstacles, the children would jump on the backs of the HMMWVs, attempting to lift the canvas and find rations. Some children fell off as drivers, realizing what was happening, accelerated their vehicles. When a vehicle did stop, the children would swarm around it, attempting to grab anything within reach. Most drivers dealt with the situation by not stopping and by weaving quickly around the obstacles. Such actions, along with the battalion policy of not feeding the refugees, kept the problem from worsening.

The division eventually replacing us at Safwan gave assistance to all refugees. Their commander had a different philosophy. Assistance was advertised on the BBC and CNN coverage was also given. Within two days, the refugee problem developed from a minor one to a crisis. Soldiers were mobbed at distribution points. I knew then we had followed the correct guidance.

MG Rhame's Visit

MG Rhame landed in his helicopter next to the TOC site at 1600 hours on 16 March 1991. We knew in advance he was making the rounds. As he approached, I could tell he was irritated. He pointblank told me he was disappointed in my award recommendations. At the time, I told him if I had made a mistake, I would fix it. I also stated I had never made combat award recommendations before. It was a new experience. He reminded me he was a soldier's soldier and I needed to reflect a soldier's soldier philosophy in the awards recommendations.

I was unaware at the time of the conversation that he had seen only twelve award recommendations for twelve officers. He thought there were no award recommendations for enlisted soldiers. Actually, over two hundred soldiers had received recommendations for valor awards at the time of his visit.

Once inside the TOC, he wanted to talk about maintenance. I went over my current deadline report with him. He seemed surprised at our low number of deadline vehicles. Furthermore, we had an accurate maintenance status on the vehicles in question. The two he was most concerned with were the M113 APC and tank we had stripped to get a number of other vehicles off deadline. Both of these vehicles were located at RAA Huebner and the tank had been accepted for turn-in.

I did not have my repair parts and major assembly statistics prepared for his visit. This was my fault. I felt I was not keeping my commanding general informed. Because of this, I was always left with the opinion he was not fully informed of the magnitude of the repair parts problem. The problem was not at unit level. Nothing could have been farther from the truth--the units were pulling more than their fair share of the load.

LTC Bullington was also present at the visit. During the course of the discussion, he offered to give us a brand new AK 47 assault rifle for our trophy case at home. I accepted. He had his driver deliver the rifle the next day. We then found out we could take two weapons home and came up with a pretty good RPG-7 launcher. The problem was we had destroyed all the

weapons we had found. I would not allow the soldiers to have bayonets because of General Order Number 1. They discarded them. Long after all the good souvenirs (brand new Iraqi equipment) were destroyed, GEN Schwarzkopf changed his policy and told the soldiers they could take a bayonet home. The soldiers never stopped reminding us, the leaders, about making them give up their bayonets. We felt like heels.

Inspector General's Inspection

I was informed by COL Moreno that we would be inspected by the IG maintenance team. COL Moreno said we were doing this voluntarily to clean the slate and prove once and for all the problem was not within the brigade. I was angry. I told him I was tired of justifying our maintenance posture and readiness rates to the same people who were supposed to be providing the support. We had a discussion of philosophies. I never liked to point fingers because it always seemed defensive and appeared to be whining, but I was really fed up with the repair part charade. More so than anybody else, I was tired of being fixed into a brigade deadline maintenance program and a substitution program.

COL Moreno wanted to know why three of D Co's tanks came up on deadline for batteries. I showed him the request for batteries for those three tanks. The requisitions were turned in long before the batteries ever went dead. In other words, the crew monitored their batteries closely. Because of this maintenance effort, the tanks were never placed on deadline.

When the batteries came in for those three tanks, LTC Schenk gave them to vehicles in another battalion on the deadline report for batteries. Now the three tanks had to go on the deadline report for us to get batteries--or somebody else's batteries.

CW3 LeMay approached me several times regarding his perception on the unfairness of the brigade priority system. He felt brigade was taking his resourcefulness for granted. When I informed him, the commanders, and MAJ Garrity of the IG inspection, they were upset. After all our maintenance efforts and performance in combat, nobody could believe the focus for finding the maintenance problem was at our level. Nonetheless, I told them we were going to be prepared. I gave all the commanders a "come to Jesus session" on maintenance knowing not a single one of them deserved it. I still wanted them to report deadline standards by the book. We would not lower our standards because of the perceptions of others.

By the time LTC Madison showed up with his inspection team, we had worked all night to gather and compile our data. We had used ten tank engines, not the thirty-two reported and briefed by DISCOM. We had a six percent fill of over three thousand repair part requisitions. All our requisitions from Ft. Riley were canceled and we were told to start over. We re-did all the requisitions to suit the CSS units. I highlighted for him every class of supply as being a pull item. I was still upset and angry over the need for such an inspection after everything we had been through.

I told him the story of our division chain of command being briefed on V-pack air filter seals at Ft. Riley in December 1990. I explained my conversations with BG Rutherford, COL Moreno, LTC Hand, COL Shadley, LTC Schenk, and LTC Myron P. Kryschal. I asked all of them for help on one item, individually, over a two-month period. Then I told him, as we stood there on 16 March 1991, how the battalion had received a grand total of six V-pack seals.

LTC Madison was, and is, a friend and an honest broker. While his inspection may have pointed out some of our soldiers' imperfections, I truly believe he understood and realized the operator maintenance training was not the real problem. If we had given any one of our soldiers a choice of a Wolf Burger, PX goodies, a telephone call home, or the repair part to make his vehicle operational, I now know the item the soldier he would choose. Leaders need to remind themselves, at all levels, that they must establish and enforce a list of logistic priorities when it comes to "taking care of soldiers."

I was told later by COL Moreno that LTC Madison's report was satisfactory with regard to our maintenance program. I noticed three days later the DISCOM sent out a message to all units asking how many V-pack seals they needed.

Soldiers Will Be Soldiers

The Scout Plt discovered a well belonging to an Iraqi farmer. This quickly became the battalion's bathing and laundry point. It was nicknamed the "Safwan Sauna."



Soldiers doing laundry and bathing in the "Safwan Sauna." This pump furnished irrigated water to the tomato fields in the area. The Jabal Sanam Mountain is in the background.



One of the scouts holds a large lizard caught in the area. He walked up to the well and pretended to throw it in the water. Three butt-naked men were seen to jump out and run away. Humor was always with us.

Statement by LT Ward, the Scout Plt Leader, describing the "Safwan Sauna" on 15 March 1991:

On the 15th of March, the Scout Plt became the proud owner of the battalion's hot tub through the ingenuity of the crews of HQ 231 and HQ 234. The platoon recognized the possible use of a farmer's old irrigation basin. The round brick basin was approximately three feet deep with a diameter of about ten feet. Although it was provided with fresh water from a 1960's pump, the pool at first required an intense "GI Party" in order to clear out the algae and other substances.

The platoon was a bit skeptical at first, but became quite excited as I proceeded to strip down and jump into the pool with my Sharps Beer in hand. After emerging from the pool spotless, the word soon got around the battalion about the hot tub.

Within a few days, everyone--from LTC Marlin to the UMCP's mechanics--had stripped the dirt from their bodies at the new-found bath. However, as usual in Iraq, comfort soon led to a new movement time. On the 20th of March, the platoon had to say goodbye to their one item of comfort and pleasure and return to the true waterless desert.

The Maintenance Plt confiscated or captured two buses, a Chevrolet Malibu, and two Rovers. They painted the battalion number "60" on the sides and used these for transportation. The Rovers quickly became known as "clown" cars. Because the bus was air conditioned, it became a popular place to cool off as the weather warmed.

Statement by CPT Loche, the Battalion Adjutant, describing the use of captured vehicles on or about 16 March 1991:

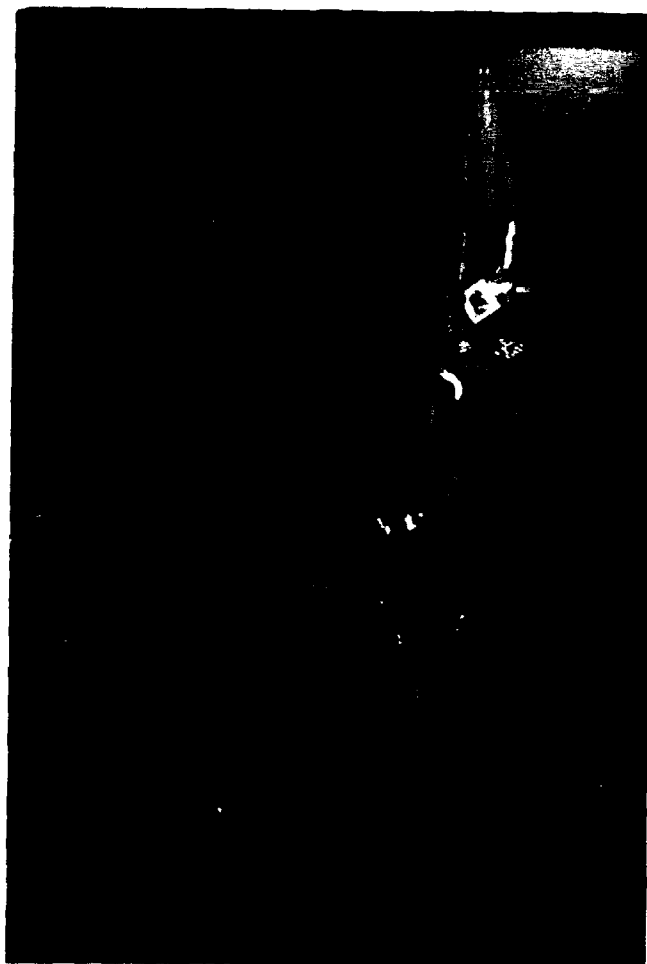
The ingenuity of the American soldier is limitless when he spots something that will make life easier. While occupying a position northwest of Safwan, the Maintenance Plt demonstrated that given the time and inclination, they can be inspiring. Throughout the whole Desert Storm campaign, they had a problem moving all the mechanics in the platoon--comfortably.

While moving to their new position, they spotted two empty buses and the soon-to-be-famous Chevy Malibu. Recovery assets were immediately dispatched to capture these priceless articles. Upon arrival in the UMCP, the vehicles were worked on as if they were absolute necessities for mission accomplishment.

A few days later, LTC Marlin was making the trip between the BSA and his CP when he passed a Chevy Malibu going in the opposite direction. The occupants surprised him with smiles and waves. He smiled and waved back. As the Malibu grew smaller in the rear-view mirror, it struck him that the occupants of the Malibu were not grateful Kuwaitis, but American soldiers. It further came to his mind that these were not just any American soldiers, but members of the Thunderbolt Battalion.

The mechanics were now mobile. The buses were put to full use--making phone runs, part runs, or simply being used as an air-conditioned haven. But the jewel of the new maintenance fleet was its Chevy Malibu--openly loved and admired by all the mechanics -- the "Heartbeat of America."

On 15 March 1991, we promoted 2LT Ashford to the rank of First Lieutenant. During promotions at Ft. Riley, we always made the officer repeat his oath of commission, pinned on the new rank, then christened him with champagne. In the desert, we used the champagne of the desert--bottled water.



LT Ashford being promoted by LTC Marlin. Bottled water is used for the christening in lieu of champagne.

We also had the opportunity to send several soldiers on the "Love Boat" cruise for four days. This was a cruise ship, but it was not the "Love Boat." Even the soldiers not getting a chance to go on the trip always enjoyed hearing about the experiences of these attendees. Of course, I suspect many of the stories became more and more exaggerated as time went by.

Statement by CPT Rode, the Battalion Assistant S3, describing his trip on the "Love Boat" on 16 March 1991:

I was awakened by MSG Perez at 0415 hours after a sleepless night due to excitement and a sleeping bag full of rain water. By 0500 hours, we reached the ALOC to link-up with 1SG Lightsey who provided transportation to the BSA for the next leg of the trip. Nothing like a short ride through the Iraqi countryside on the back of a truck on a foggy, damp morning. Vehicle occupants included SSG Dang O. Oppapan (Medical Plt), SPC John P. Cass (D Co), and SPC Derrick B. McCall (B Co). Upon arrival at the BSA, we transferred our bags to a five ton vehicle and headed for the Division Main.

By 0700 hours, we arrived at Division Main geared up and ready to go, only to suffer a mild let-down when we were informed that the Chinook helicopters, our primary mode of travel, would not be lifting off until 0930 hours. This turned out to be 1030 hours. We killed time by holding conversations (war stories) with other soldiers of the forty-two member contingency. We also did some video-taping with the unit camcorder.

After two hours of roll calls and manifesting, we were finally on our way to Bahrain with a bus driver who was a cross between Richard Petty and Bob Barker (Price is Right). Again, delays were the order of the day as it took us about forty-five minutes to make it through customs. As we neared our destination, we spotted lights on the pier "Mina Sullivan" and, in the distance, a huge floating vessel with the words "Canard Princess" written on the sides. The odyssey began!!!

Our first stop. Our cabins had hot showers, and commodes--some things from our distant past. The food

afterwards--fit for kings. Then I spotted it in the distance. It was red, white, and blue--about eight inches tall, twelve ounces in volume, and bore the title "Budweiser." The night was rounded out with a trip to the phones, a little disco action, and "MORE BUDS."

Awakening on a soft bed with pillows and a roof over my head is something I've come to realize that I can never take for granted. Another great meal, a tour of downtown Manama, Bahrain, series of filmings with the camcorder, fun and games aboard the Canard Princess, and Bud were the order of the day on 17 March.

As a result of a chit-chat with a passerby sailor on the pier, we discovered on 18 March one of the greatest pieces of naval history was ours for the viewing, with only one slight problem--it was about three and one-half miles out in the gulf and none of us could tread water. Just like the trip itself, everything had a way of working out, and there we were on board the battleship USS Missouri, smack-dab in the middle of the gulf. After an extended tour and a few souvenirs, we were on our way back to shore, filled with memories and bragging rights. Back on shore--Pizza Hut, shopping, fun and games, and the Buds were tasting even better.

The 19th of March was not the day we were looking forward to. Saying goodbyes to great food, great fun, new-found friends, and old acquaintances (BUD), and it's back to the sandbox.

Not all the soldiers had a great time. We were constantly on guard for our soldier's health. The area of Safwan was noted as a dirty town--dead bodies, dead animals, no drainage, and damp, cold weather. We were constantly reminding soldiers to take sponge baths and to change underwear and socks. Washing hands before eating was also supervised. Unfortunately, there was never a guarantee, and several soldiers became sick. Fortunately, we had great a great Medical Plt.

Statement by LT Weiner, the C Co XO, describing two soldiers who became sick in the Safwan area on 15 March 1991:

CPT Torrence was reconning a range to fire small arms in the vicinity of the airstrip. The medic M113 APC broke down in the morning at the airstrip while transporting soldiers to meet some Congressmen. Almost simultaneously, two soldiers, SSG Judge and SPC David S. Estep, were discovered with high temperatures and signs of heat cramps. Using their tank, they were transported the two hundred meters to the BSA, where they were placed on a MEDAVAC for heat cramps, with temperatures around 104°. It was the first hot day and the casualties in C Co caused a lot of concern about possible future heat casualties. SPC Estep finally arrived back at the unit about 20 March, and SSG Judge, whose problem was complicated by a virus, arrived back about 28 March.

Congressional Visits

For a period of three days, members of Congress visited the airfield at Safwan. A tent was set up there and a briefing provided for the visitors. Every day the battalion would get a list of the visiting representatives' states and find soldiers from those states to meet with them.



A Congressional staffer looking over one of the captured Iraqi tanks on the Safwan airfield.



LTC Marlin standing in front of a captured Iraqi T72 tank. The ammunition boxes between the two tanks are marked as arriving from Jordan after the U.N. embargo went into effect.



The 2nd Brigade Commanders: LTC Marlin, LTC Gross, LTC Fake, CSM Tadina, COL Moreno, LTC Schenk, LTC Hawkins, LTC Gingrich, LTC Hand.

Live Fire Training

We set up a range at the base of the Jabal Sanam Mountain. The mountain provided an excellent safety backdrop for live fire shooting. Over a period of days, all the soldiers fired their individual weapons and some anti-tank rockets (AT-4). We also fired all the tank machine guns.

On the 18th of March, we towed two captured T72 tanks to the range. After removing all the ammunition, we staged them for flank and frontal shots between berms of dirt. We intended to do some of our own battalion tests on the T72 tank. We planned to shoot at the Iraqi tank with the M700, M800, and M900

series 105mm ammunition at one thousand, two thousand, and three thousand meters. We also brought along the ADC(M)'s M1A1 tank to shoot 120mm.

MAJ Cook was in charge of the range. While he set up the range, I took my tank and crew to the top of the Jabal Sanam Mountain. They would serve as the safety control monitor from the top of the mountain. Plus, I was concerned about a retransmission station crew on top of the mountain. The tank would provide them safety and communications.

On top of the Jabal Sanam Mountain, I walked around the area. The top was littered with destroyed ADA guns and communication cables. More equipment was pushed or thrown down the side. Even trucks and large generators had rolled over the side and were halfway down the mountain. Once I was satisfied that the crew and CPT Paluso were briefed and understood their instructions, I returned to join MAJ Cook at the base of the mountain.

**Statement by CPT Paluso, the Battalion Assistant S3,
describing activities on top of the Jabal Sanam
Mountain on 18 March 1991:**

I was informed on the evening of 18 March that I would take HQ 66 on top of the mountain in the vicinity of Safwan the next morning. SSG Evans, CPL Perkins, SPC Schnurr, and I departed the TOC at 0630 hours in HQ 66. Even though I had worked on the night shift, I was excited to command my first tank in Iraq.

We arrived at the range by 0700 hours and MAJ Cook pointed out that he wanted us on the mountain top adjacent to the C Co 121 Signal Bn retransmission station. We moved from the south side of the mountain, around the eastern side, to the northeastern end of the hill mass and made our way up a narrow, winding road. When we got to the top, we lost sight

of the ground and slowly edged our way onto the flat ground. We moved to the right and drove past C Co 121 Signal Bn to turn around.

By this time, HQ 6, with LTC Marlin, had us follow him to the south side of the mountain top. It was an Iraqi communications site defended by destroyed ADA units. When we were set by LTC Marlin, MAJ Cook said we were in the line of fire, and to move northwest on the ridge. When we were set, I got off HQ 66 and linked up with the retransmission site NCOIC. I explained we were there for their protection and we would be shooting small arms and service sabot at T72 tanks at the bottom of the mountain.

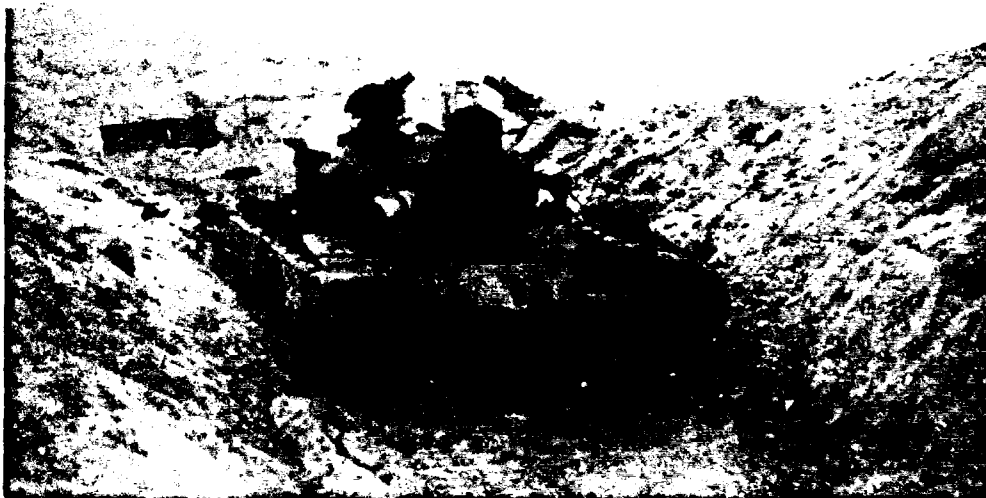
When it came time for the sabot test fire, we looked over the side of the cliff and the target T72 was right in line with HQ 66. When the firing started, we could hear ricochets bouncing around and it was a bit of a rush. We were laughing and joking, when all of a sudden a sabot round came tumbling past HQ 66 and missed us by twenty-five meters. We could see it tumbling past us and just missed the signal site. I called back to the range to inform them how close the sabot round was to us. They rogered and said they would change the angle of firing. This did not help, as another sabot round came closer and missed us by fifteen meters. Everyone hiding behind the tank now had a more serious attitude. We called back down and informed them of another close one. They rogered and said they would change the line of firing again.

At this time, CPL Perkins added the division motto, "Not one more life." LTC Marlin said, "Roger," and we could almost sense the colonel's thinking over the radio as "no kidding." Adjustments were made. Then LTC Marlin made the comment, "Are all the candy asses out of danger?" One of the female NCOs looked at me and said, "Who's he calling a candy ass?" I said, "Yes, they are right here with us." LTC Marlin stated, "Roger," and his thinking over the radio was interpreted as "Whoops, I'm sorry."

The firing of sabots stopped shortly afterward and we were all relieved, thus ending our mission of protecting the C Co 121 Signal Bn personnel.

We fired all the rounds. Every round we fired from the 105mm at each range penetrated the front slope of the tank. The

25mm chain gun armored piercing rounds penetrated the turret. SFC Fernandez positioned his tank at eight hundred meters to the flank in a deep pit and served as the spotter. He provided accurate sketches on location and type rounds as they hit the tank. At the end of the day, I attempted to take pictures of the penetrations to match the sketches. Unfortunately, the combination of a cheap camera and bad lighting did not capture the results of the shooting on film.



Photos of the T72 tanks after being shot. One hole in the front slope shows the fire burning inside. The hole was caused by a 105mm 800 series sabot round at two thousand meters.

CHAPTER 16

ASSEMBLY AREA ALLEN

20 MARCH 1991 - 14 APRIL 1991

Departing the Line of Demarcation

We finally received orders to move. The orders were not the ones we expected. The battalion moved with the rest of the division to a position northwest of Kuwait and became the VII Corps reserve. We were pleased we were getting out of the Safwan area and returning to the open desert. We were not pleased about traveling another one hundred sixty kilometers heading north instead of south. The soldiers were ready to go home.

We put together a quartering party to depart on the 19th of March. CPT Bond was put in charge. His mission was to push out ahead of us and do a reconnaissance of the intermediate AA en route to AA Allen. All of our track vehicles were capable of moving under their own power. Our only deadlined track vehicles were at RAA Huebner.

Statement by CPT Bond, the Battalion Assistant S3, describing the quartering party move to AA Allen on 19 March 1991:

At 1226 hours on 19 March 1991, I was at the brigade TOC, then set on the Safwan Airfield, nosing around for information on the planned move to AA Allen. CPT D. Bruce Hain told me our quartering parties would leave at 1300 hours today. He handed me a graphic overlay and I returned to HQ 230, then to our TOC. LTC Marlin appointed me earlier as the quartering party OIC and the battalion was alerted on the upcoming mission. LTC Marlin directed an SP at 1500 hours, as 1300 hours was unrealistic.

At 1300 hours, I had the leaders of the various companies meet me at the TOC (PU 530400). I briefed them on where they were going and to line up at 1430 hours. The original plan was to take a platoon from each company. At 1430 hours, we changed the numbers to two tanks per company and the extra tanks were sent back to their companies.

The quartering party was lined up at 1510 hours in the following order: C Co, B Co, A Co, A Mortar Plt M577, Medical Plt M113 APC, HQ21, HQ31, four fueler HEMMTs, and D Co. After much consideration as to bumper numbers and numbers of soldiers present, the quartering party moved out at 1525 hours in column formation. I was riding in the loader's hatch of C65 with LT Weiner as the lead vehicle. We moved at fifteen MPH across what turned out to be smooth desert terrain.

We arrived at QU 270070 around 1730 hours with all our vehicles. Although the first leg of the trip was only forty-five kilometers, I was more than relieved to reach our destination in one group. We refueled and conducted maintenance in a column formation as darkness brought an end to the day's activities. Determined to make the most of any situation, SGM Neel put up a TOC extension and cots.

At 0545 hours on the 20th of March, I met with LT Weiner, LT Kool, LT Cook, SSG Paul N. Plumb, SGM Neel, and a medic to explain how to set up and mark our positions. At 0700 hours, the various elements moved out to mark their positions. At 0715 hours, CPT Hall arrived with the wheeled convoy and set up a hot refuel point. Around 0745 hours, the four leaders of each company quartering party showed up at the fuel point to meet their companies. At 0915 hours, we heard the roar of tanks approaching through the mist to our east. Minutes later, the battalion arrived at the re-fuel point, having lost only one M113 APC to maintenance. C14 broke down at the fuel point with a blown turbo charger.

I gave the order to move on the night of 19 March. We started our move to line up or stage at 0500 hours. Our SP time was 0600 hours. The terrain was channelized and forced us to go single file until we cleared the bermed and quarried areas. Our move took us due west to the northern part of the Jabal Sanam

Mountain. We headed south on the west side of the Jabal Sanam Mountain and then hit our LD. At the same time, we linked up with TF 2-16 on our left flank. The first day's move covered about sixty kilometers. The second day we traveled about eighty to one hundred kilometers and moved into the division's AA Allen.

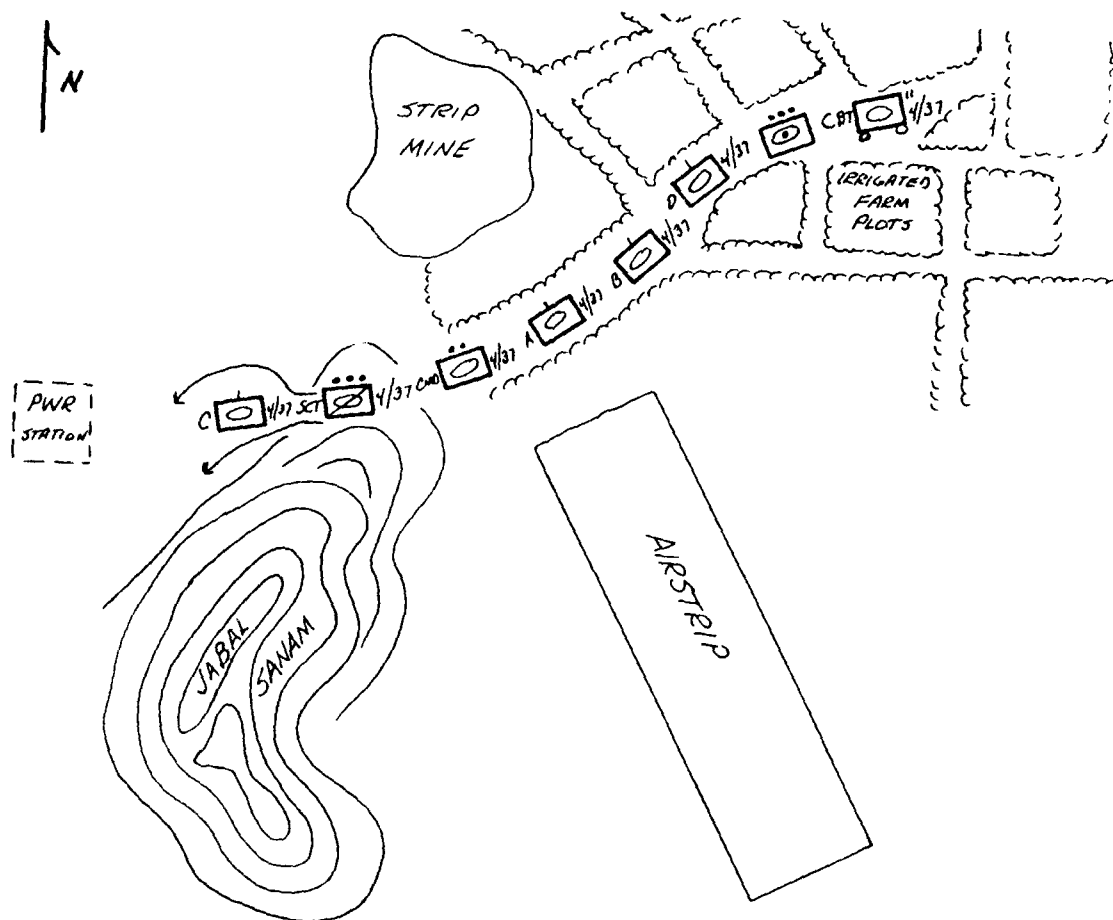


Diagram #55. Movement from Safwan.

We all lined up on time and hit the SP at 0600 hours. The Scout Plt led with C Co and the Command Group behind them. It was slow going. The order of march behind us was A Co, B Co, and D Co. The Mortar Plt and the combat trains trailed. CPT Clidas departed the gas station location as part of the BSA and moved on a separate wheel route. CPT Hall met us with the fuel trucks at the first stop.

Statement by LT Ward, the Scout Plt Leader, as he departed the Safwan area on 20 March 1991:

The Scout Plt spent the night of the 19th in a tight AA around the TOC site. The element lined up in column in preparation to move through the SP point. The lead element was SSG Firestone in HQ 232. After lining up, the element received a new SP time of 0545 hours. The SP was originally intended to be a road crossing situated near the TOC area. At 0545 hours, the Scout Plt departed at the SP and began movement to PL Kuwait.

The Scout Plt passed through D Co's vicinity on route out of the area. As the element moved to a second crossing, C Co began its movement in front of my platoon. Apparently they were confused about the SP and decided to go ahead and move. SSG Firestone called up a report to me stating he was being cut off. Since we were moving through a quarry area, it was impossible to pass the tank company. Thus, I called my element and instructed them to mix in with the C Co column. My vehicle mixed in with their column.

After approximately one mile, the tank company broke off to the left heading for the northeast side of a large hill. Knowing we were to go west of the hill, SSG Firestone found a route allowing us to bypass C Co and take the lead for the battalion. We broke into a two-section formation and moved to our position in the battalion formation.

Statement by CPT Hall, the Battalion S4, as the combat trains prepared to move from Safwan on 20 March 1991:

All the ALOC UMCP wheels moved to stage at the old TOC site, the gas station, at 2200 hours. The

wheels moved early to prevent the "bumper car" effect. When the battalion moved, the wheels were always cut off by the tanks. Once at the gas station, forty-three wheeled vehicles were topped off and settled in for the night. It rained like cats and dogs and the guards complained the entire night.

The last of the wheels from the TOC lined up with me at 0500 hours (right on time). The wheels drove from the gas station at 0530 hours on 20 March 1991. The road march was the best move throughout the war by the ALOC wheels. There was no traffic or breakdowns. A perfect road march.

I received a radio call on or about 0630 hours stating four fuel HEMMTs were located at the link-up point (PU 060128). About 0645 hours, I stopped at an MP checkpoint and CPT Paluso told me the four HEMMTs were at PU 160128, ten kilometers off the route. I told him, "Yeah, right," and continued to move to the original grid location of PU 060128.

At 0715 hours, the wheels arrived at the link-up point and established a hot refuel site. On or about 0745 hours, it was reported to me we had lost our Chevy Malibu. We were going to give it to our interpreter. The car hit a rock that ripped off the oil pan. The battalion took approximately thirty-seven minutes to get through the refuel point. Refuel was quick, but it was far from being pretty.

Statement by CPT Clidas, HHC Commander, as we departed the Safwan area on 20 March 1991:

The field trains departed with the 201st Fwd Spt Bn at 0600 hours. Upon arrival in the "overnight BSA," 201st Fwd Spt Bn told us they were going to issue a B-ration. Our mess section had no room to haul this extra ration, so it was decided the battalion would eat a hot meal that evening. The LOGPAC went out at 1600 hours. The meal was chicken and rice. In their haste to issue the meal to the units quickly, the companies reported the Mess Section issued them an unopened can of frosting.

The field trains departed the next morning at 0600 hours. Two two-and-one-half ton trucks had flat tires, and one two-and-one-half ton truck had a blown radiator. The trains had two tow bars already in use. 201st Fwd Spt Bn provided the tow capability to retrieve the vehicle with the blown radiator. We

arrived at 1600 hours. All vehicles closed by 2000 hours.

I made a mistake. I lined up the Tank Companies incorrectly for the departure from the AA. This caused a delay in getting the battalion into our box formation. We finally formed a box formation by PL Chambers, but it seemed like it took forever. Going from the AA all the way to the SP in single file was not the smartest thing I ever directed--I knew better.

The morning fog, coupled with the burning oil fields' smog, limited our visibility to about one kilometer. I was on my tank with the Command Group and positioned to trail C Co to their left in order to keep an eye on TF 2-16. C Co went into a company line formation with platoons in column. I limited their speed to five KMPH so the other companies had time to catch up. A Co caught up after five kilometers. The real error was allowing A Co to stay behind C Co instead of putting them on line with C Co. Hence, B and C Cos had to come all the way from the rear to complete the box formation.

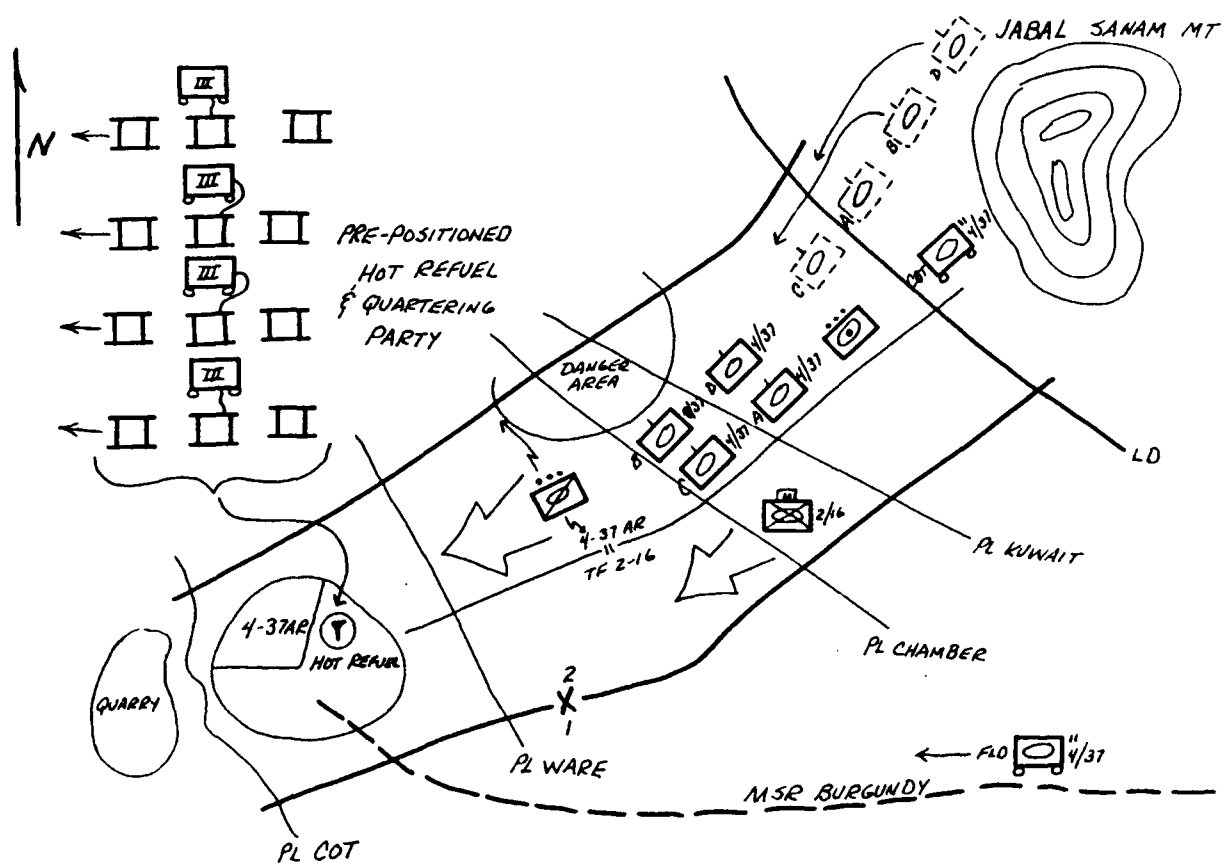


Diagram #56. Getting Into Formation.



C Co at the LD. Photo is taken from LTC Marlin's tank on their left flank. Notice the haze and smog in the air.

Our proficiency at maneuvering in the desert was so good that we made up for any mistakes in a matter of minutes. This was no different. I was just glad no one was shooting at us. The Scout Plt was about two kilometers forward of the formation and stayed there the entire sixty kilometer trip. I felt really good about departing the area and heading back, even though I knew we still had a long way to go.

We came on line with TF 2-16 about five kilometers south of PL Chambers. LTC Fake and I had some great cross talk for the entire trip. One of the first things we learned about

maneuvering battalions abreast was it took a lot of cross talk between commanders to manage and keep the formation. I was certainly getting my share of practice--first with LTC Gross and TF 3-37 going to Safwan, and now with LTC Fake and TF 2-16 going back. TF 3-37 trailed us.

The trip took about two to three hours as we gradually increased speed. At one point, we hit a sand storm lasting about thirty minutes which completely obscured everyone. The weather changed quickly from damp and cold to dry and windy. Most of the soldiers wore a scarf to breath through and goggles to protect their eyes. The move was well controlled. Only one vehicle, a D Co tank, broke track en route.

We had about eighteen tanks in the battalion with bad track. However, because we were moving back, new track was not being provided as replacement track. Also, we knew we were going to turn in our M1 tanks for M1A1s. The name of the game was to stick it out, limp home, and turn in the tanks. We were also short spare track blocks. The first sergeants had pooled most of their spare blocks. When a tank went down for broken track, they delivered the spare track blocks. Several tanks were running on steel tracks. The burden was on the tank crew to get them home. Three of our M113 APCs had shorted-tracked their tracks because of a shortage of road wheels. We could not get these for two weeks, and neither could anyone else.

As we pulled into the first AA, CPT Hall was in position with the fuel trucks. We ran a gas station operation and were completed in a matter of minutes. C23 caught fire. I was

getting tired of tank fires. This made a total of about ten fires, serious and not-so-serious, since we deployed. I was upset with the crew and started to give them my ten cents worth when we found out it was not a fire but a blown turbo charger.

Statement by CPT Torrence, the C Co Commander, as we arrived at the refuel point en route to Assembly Area Allen on 20 March 1991:

The battalion went from company on line to company column about two kilometers north of the refuel point. The Command Group fell into the C Co line. We hit the fuelers intermixed with all vehicles from all companies.

The companies picked up guides from the quartering party. D Co policed up their down tank (broken track). C14 had a turbo charger blow up. Everyone was initially convinced it was another tank fire.

The companies lined up on the next quartering party and moved out ASAP. Total time for the battalion refuel was thirty-seven minutes--one of the fastest of the war.



LTC Marlin conferring with CPT Torrence at the intermediate AA. Note CPT Torrence is wearing a neck scarf and LTC Marlin is holding his scarf. Tank crew in the background is checking oil and batteries.

The fuel in Saudi Arabia was a very fine quality. This caused us greater problems with fuel pumps and leaks. Though all of our power plants (engines) were fireproofed at Ft. Riley, we went to the extreme in TAA Roosevelt to pull every back deck to inspect for fluid leaks, but they still happened. This was something we were conscious of constantly. Each tank had two to three times more portable fire extinguishers on board than authorized. We brought these from Ft. Riley.

As the weather changed, the impact on our air filtration systems worsened. Crews cleaned their filters every time they stopped. This was routine. However, the amount of residue shaken out of the air filters dramatically increased from five to ten pounds of sand. Crews used silicon, plastic bags, green Army tape, and even cardboard to enhance the seals on their air filters. Tank crews took their issue neck scarves and placed them over the air filter vent to screen out the heavy sand. Tank crews traveled with gun tubes over the right front fender in order to put the turret over the air filter to deflect the sand that was being kicked up by the track. We tried and did everything to keep the sand out of the engine.

The GPS system was a real champion. It made our move back easy. I thought we might get to take a break once we were in the AA. However, we now had deadline tanks in the area. I made the decision to send them with the next quartering party. In other words, we knew by pushing our deadline tanks out in front of us, we had better control of them. Brigade concurred and we jumped to form a quartering party to leave within the hour. CPT Bond was put in charge. He departed at 1200 hours to AA Allen. I gave specific instructions to 1SG Macasio regarding the towing of the C23 tank: go slow and take breaks to allow the tank to cool down.

Statement by CPT Bond, the Battalion Assistant S3, describing the quartering parties and the move to Assembly Area Allen on 20 March 1991:

By 1000 hours on the 20th of March, the battalion was set at a staging area in the vicinity of PU

270070. LTC Marlin informed me I would be taking the next quartering party out at 1200 hours. With much less anxiety than the day before, I began planning the move. This quartering party was larger than the last one. We towed C23 and a Medical Plt M113 APC, giving us ten tanks, two M113 APCs, three M577s, four fuelers, and two HEMMTs. C Co sent 1SG Macasio along to police up their towed tank should it fall out.

We moved out at 1210 hours in column formation: HQ65, B Co, A Co, the Mortar Plt, the TOC, Medical Plt, fuelers, C Co, C-7, and HQ9 with the retransmission equipment. The ground was fairly smooth and we managed about twelve to fifteen MPH. The quartering party made two maintenance halts as problems were in no short supply. An A Co tank with pre-cleaner problems stopped frequently to clean sand out of its filters, and two tanks broke track.

By 1700 hours, the quartering party was in the vicinity of PU 683122, where we stopped for the night, waiting for 1SG Macasio to bring in the straggling tanks. By dark, we had all the quartering party vehicles consolidated.

At 0600 hours on the 21st of March, we moved out toward AA Allen only thirty-three kilometers away. Ten kilometers out, B33 fell out, and at 0830 hours, we stopped at PQ 660455. The companies began marking their positions, but it was obvious the main body was on our heels due to a "Death March" with no maintenance halts. At 0915 hours, the main body arrived at our refuel point.

As the tanks finished their refuel, they were guided to their positions by the company guide. CPT Wock called just as it was getting dark to inform me we had a potential problem facing us the next morning. The route went directly through another quarry and dug-up area. He and CPT Beals spent most of the night doing a reconnaissance with the intent of guiding the battalion through it.

Statement by CPT Wock, the D Co Commander, describing his reconnaissance of the quarry on 20 March 1991:

On or about 1300 hours, 20 March 1991, all of the commanders and staff assembled at the TOC to pass on current maintenance status and to receive the FRAGO concerning the battalion's move the following morning. I was informed the battalion was going to move with three companies--A Co, D Co, and B Co--abreast, followed by C Co in reserve. LTC Marlin said it was imperative we get into this formation and, more importantly, stay on line with TF 2-16 on A Co's left flank. At the time of the meeting, no SP for the move was given. MAJ Cook, the Battalion S3, gave each of the line companies an SP around 1615 hours.

D Co was to be the center of the battalion's move. I took my HMMWV to do a reconnaissance of the route to the SP. This recon was especially critical as the battalion had to move in the dark to the various SPs. To get to my SP at QU 240024, I drove through C Co's position due to the quarry and strip mines to my front. Through the use of a Magellan GPS, I discovered my SP was smack in the middle of a quarry. I looked at my 1:250,000 map and there it was, bigger than Stuttgart! The boneheads in the TOC had placed my SP over the hammer and pick symbol on the map.

It was evident to me that A Co would not be able to take up a position on my left if I did not adjust my SP. I called CPT Beals, the A Co Commander, about the possible link-up problem. He informed me he had a reconnaissance party out, south of the quarry area, and he would send someone out to the north of the quarry. I told him to send his reconnaissance element to the tower at QU 230016. I waited there for about twenty minutes. About 1745 hours, the sun went down and I could no longer see the horizon. As the sun went down, so did the value of any further reconnaissance.

In the end, I selected QU 231011 as the SP for my unit. I called LTC Marlin and explained to him the changes to my SP. Once he understood the impact, he had the TOC notify TF 2-16 and TF 3-37 about the results of my reconnaissance. Additionally, both A Co and B Co were given a new SP to effect the battalion's link-up.

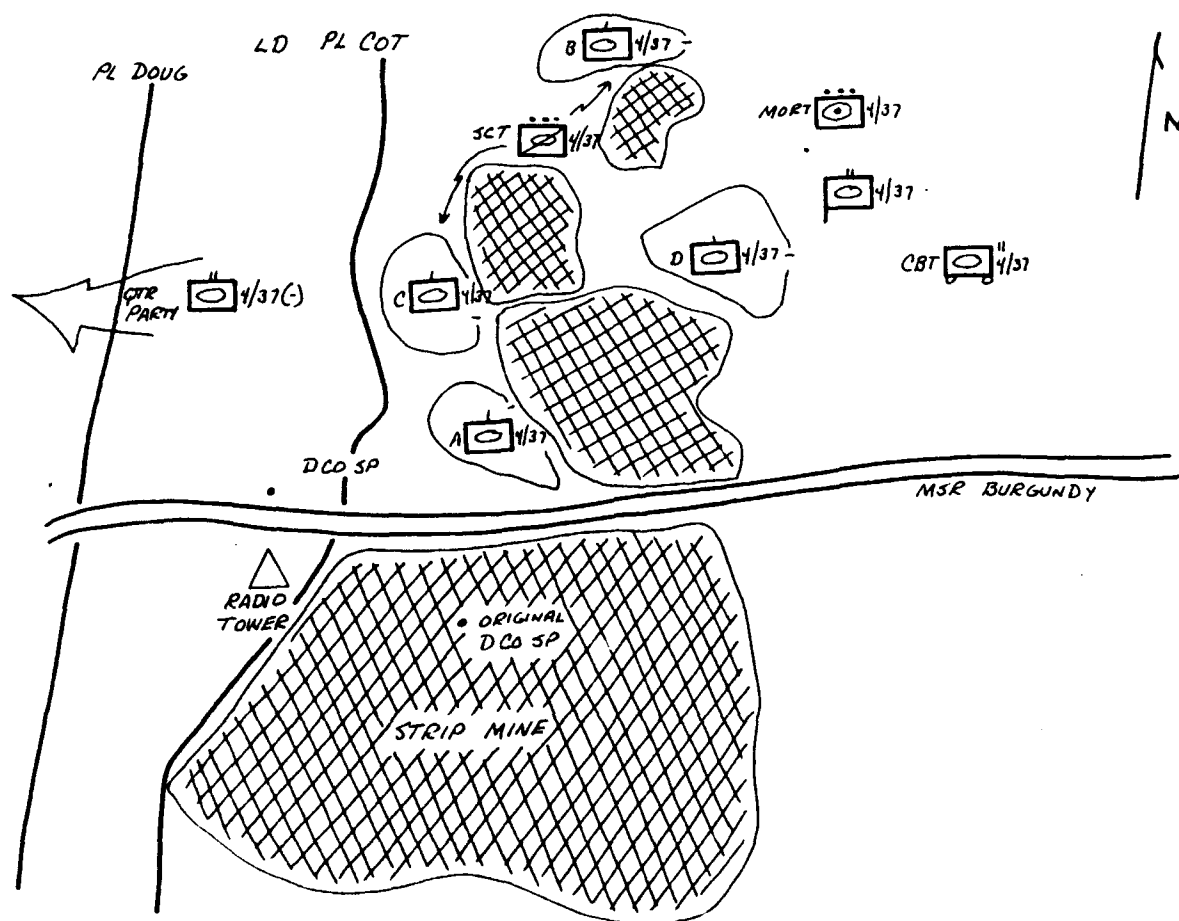


Diagram #57. Getting Out of the Quarry.

The night was uneventful and the weather was great. It was our first night out in the open desert and the soldiers felt safer. The next morning was the usual struggle despite the reconnaissance. Also, there was confusion over the graphics issued by the brigade. The graphics illustrated two routes on the map to get us to AA Allen.

Statement by MAJ Cook, the Battalion S3, as the Command Group departed for the second leg of their movement to AA Allen on 21 March 1991:

The Command Group consisting of HQ66 (M1 tank), HQ230 (FSO M113 APC), HQ32 (ALO M113 APC), HQ3 (S3 HMMWV), HQ400 (FSO M577 APC), HQ 6 (Battalion Commander HMMWV), HQ401 (FSO's HMMWV) and HQ 39 (S3 M109 van with trailer) departed at 0500 hours for the link-up with A Co at the proposed SP. LTC Marlin was leading with HQ66, as he was the only vehicle in the Command Group to possess a GPS.

The route had not been reconned previously and, within a kilometer, the Command Group was lost in the quarries to the west of the AA. LTC Marlin was able to turn the convoy around one hundred and eighty degrees and move toward the southeast to bypass the dead-end quarries.

Once at the end of the quarries, the route led back to the southwest through the quarries and was very sandy soil. Deep dips between berms ranged from three to six feet high and had to be traversed by the tracks and wheels. Trafficability was rather easy for the tracks and HMMWVs, however HQ39 was finding it difficult to keep up. Just prior to clearing the quarries, HQ6 with CPT Paluso called stating that HQ39 (SPC David E. Morgan and SPC Matthew E. Carroll) was stuck in the last dip. Upon link-up with A Co, HQ32 was tasked rear-ward (SGT Robert E. Perritt, CPT Role, and SPC Michel) to pull HQ39 out of the hole. It took approximately fifteen minutes to recover all vehicles. We sent HQ39 to the combat trains element to move with the other wheels.

On the night of 20 March, brigade called to add way point N5A to our maps. The first message had the north (N) and south (S) way points reversed. I corrected them on the radio and they restated the message correctly. I then asked if the way point N5A replaced N5, or if it was meant to be an additional way point. My question was relevant only because our route through the desert was sometimes altered due to other locations or dangerous areas. I was informed it was an additional way point. This still did not make any sense when looking at the map. I again called brigade and asked the same question and received the same answer. I left it alone for the night.

The next morning, at 0400 hours, a radio conversation between TF 2-16 and brigade discussed N5 versus N5A. I asked again--the same answer. I sent MAJ Cook over to the brigade TOC to check on the route. He returned and said they wanted us to go to N5 then to N5A. He shook his head because he could not understand the route either.

I put out the information on the radio to all the commanders. D Co was the only one who did not respond on the radio--they were the lead company for the move to AA Allen.

By a twist of fate, D Co was the center of a three tank company line formation and allowed them to navigate. We traveled the entire one hundred kilometers without a maintenance or rest stop. Having three tank companies on line with one trailing is difficult to maintain control for one hundred kilometers. It took a lot of work to accomplish this feat.

Statement by CPT Beals, the A Co Commander, describing his movement to AA Allen on 21 March, 1991:

We moved out of our night lager/staging area to establish a three company up, one company back formation along the SP. At 0500 hours, the company moved down to the agreed-upon link-up point. We were set and ready to execute by 0530 hours. A Co was supposed to maintain our line with TF 2-16 to the left. A Co was not able to achieve the link-up because of a rock quarry. LTC Marlin called and told me to try to go to the south of the quarry and link-up with TF 2-16. My Red 1 (LT Evans) had reconned the route the night before. I told LTC Marlin we could go either way, but I would probably throw six or seven tracks if I went south. He gave us permission to stay north. I put my company in a column formation.

I finally obtained a link-up with TF 2-16 about thirty-five minutes after our SP crossing at PL COT (LD). We were hampered by the quarry and the fog inhibited good observation. Once we established contact, we began to play a slinky game. The battalion was setting the pace with D Co. A Co was on the left, and B Co on the right was guiding on C Co.

Death 5 (LT Leonard) was using the Magellan GPS to announce coming turns (i.e., "Those in Death 5, ten degree turn to the right"). LTC Marlin called and told him to stop announcing all the changes ten degrees or less. LT Leonard protested and the battalion zig-zagged across the desert.

The effect on A Co was difficult. We had the Vulcan ADA Plt on line, maintained contact with TF 2-16 and then hastily pulled them out as the Thunderbolts and Rangers [TF 2-16] came together again. Ace 5 (LT McBroom) was noted as saying, "We are getting crushed by the Rangers."

Another event noted was TF 3-37 following us. In order to maintain contact with our trail element, they positioned a Scout Section on each side of our combat trains. This confused the move even more because we could not separate their unit from ours. Later, the same Scout Section ended up on A Co's left and confused the Ranger elements right flank company.

Statement by CPT Hall, the Battalion S4, describing his movement to AA Allen with the combat trains on 21 March 1991:

The ALOC/UMCP went to the SP to link-up with the Mortar Plt at 0500 hours. All the vehicles turned on their lights and it looked like a long snake (approximately sixty vehicles) traveling across a black sheet. The column moved about two and one-half miles and linked up with the Mortar Plt, which had no trouble seeing them coming up behind them. The battalion moved out at 0600 hours to stage at the SP. At 0615 hours, I linked up with the Mortar Plt Leader, LT Powers, and we talked about the "bright column of vehicles."

All of a sudden, a dog came out of the blue. I had to tell LT Powers not to shoot the dog. He reached down to pat the dog and, as the column started to move, the dog ran alongside the column for a couple of miles. It was sad we could not take him! We never saw the dog again.

The column closed on AA Allen around 1000 hours and established another refuel point. The refuel point remained in place to top off all the broken vehicles coming in while the rest of the tracks and wheels established "Ozzy World." (CPT Hall's nickname was Oz, as in the Wizard of Oz, and the combat trains became Ozzy World.)

Several interesting transmissions:

(1) At 0645 hours, the TF 3-37 TOC called MAJ Cook and asked, "Where is your trail element?" His response was, "I have no idea," as sixty-plus vehicles with their lights on lined up approximately eight hundred meters behind him. My response was, "Turn around."

(2) At 0900 hours, LTC Marlin informed CPT Loche he had more vehicles (tanks) with him than were up front. CPT Loche's response was, "It's not so bad; they're not all broken." LTC Marlin's response was, "Thanks for the words of encouragement."

We began to drop tanks for maintenance and track problems.

Unlike the war, when a tank dropped out, we kept an operational

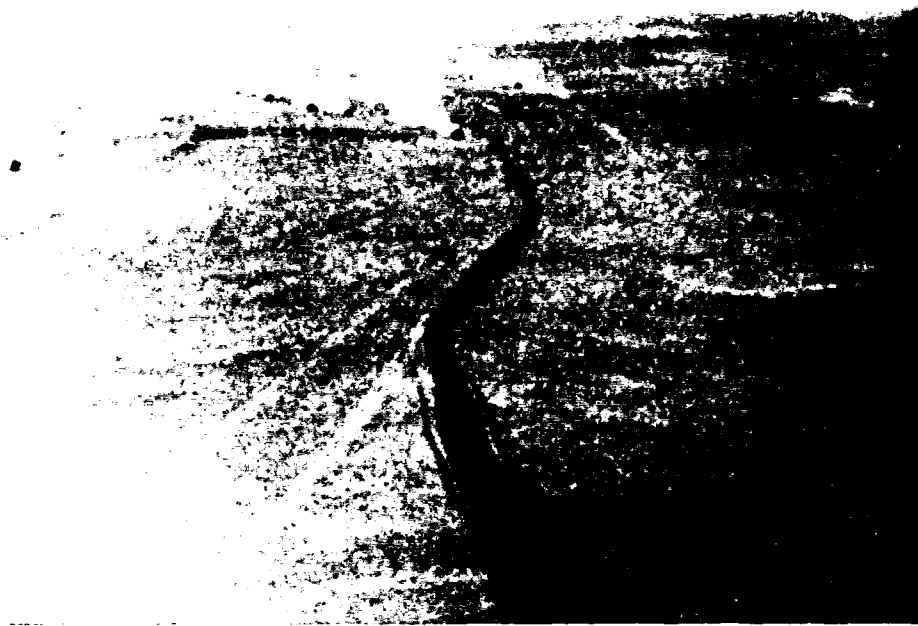
vehicle with the downed tank to tow it to AA Allen. When one tank stopped, this meant two tanks were out of the formation.

Statement by CPT Torrence, the C Co Commander, describing desert march conditions on 21 March 1991:

By the time we made this move, all of the companies had adopted a recovery policy of leaving an operational vehicle with any vehicle dropping out of the formation. This policy, coupled with the policy of no maintenance halts, created a large number of vehicles not keeping up with the formation. C Co finished the march into AA Allen with four operational tanks. Two tanks had gone with the quartering party. four tanks had fallen out for various problems along with their wingmen.

My XO stayed behind with the "second group" and, in the end, the company had closed with all of their vehicles well before the night. This was the first battalion move where C Co was not leading. It was refreshing to follow the other units for a change.

During all road marches, we could not execute maintenance halts. I could not understand this as it is practiced at all schools as the proper way to keep the fleet moving. During marches as long as one hundred kilometers, we had to continue to move. I believe one or two halts would have dramatically reduced those vehicles falling out. Once a vehicle fell out, it was usually catastrophic. The Company Commanders asked again and again for maintenance halts. On all marches we were denied. On all marches we lost vehicles we might have saved by a short five to ten minute halt.



Aerial photo of the battalion en route to AA Allen.

When we finally arrived at N5, D Co automatically took us to N5A. We were too far along when I realized what had happened. TF 2-16 continued to N5. The brigade formation split. The split was not noticed because TF 3-37 Scout Plt moved forward and were mistaken for the TF 2-16 Scout Plt. TF 3-37 was still trailing us. TF 2-16 discovered a one-half ton trailer belonging to 4th Bn, 5th FA in the middle of the desert. The trailer was lost during the G-day attack.

**Statement by LT Ward, the Scout Plt Leader, describing
an obstacle en route to AA Allen on 21 March 1991:**

During the movement to AA Allen on 21 March, the Scout Plt was leading the battalion's by approximately four kilometers. After passing through checkpoint N5, the Scout Plt changed their course to N5A. Along the route, at grid PU 871065, the platoon ran into a two-lane north/south highway with five-foot berms running along each side. Anticipating the berms would cause a problem for the advancing battalion, I called LTC Marlin with a spot report and suggested he alter the battalion formation in order to negotiate the obstacle.

LTC Marlin changed the formation to companies on line and platoons in column in order to allow a quick passage through the few gaps in the berm. This movement allowed the battalion to continue movement with almost no delay in their march speed. After passing through the obstacle, the battalion went back into the former formation and continued to march to AA Allen.

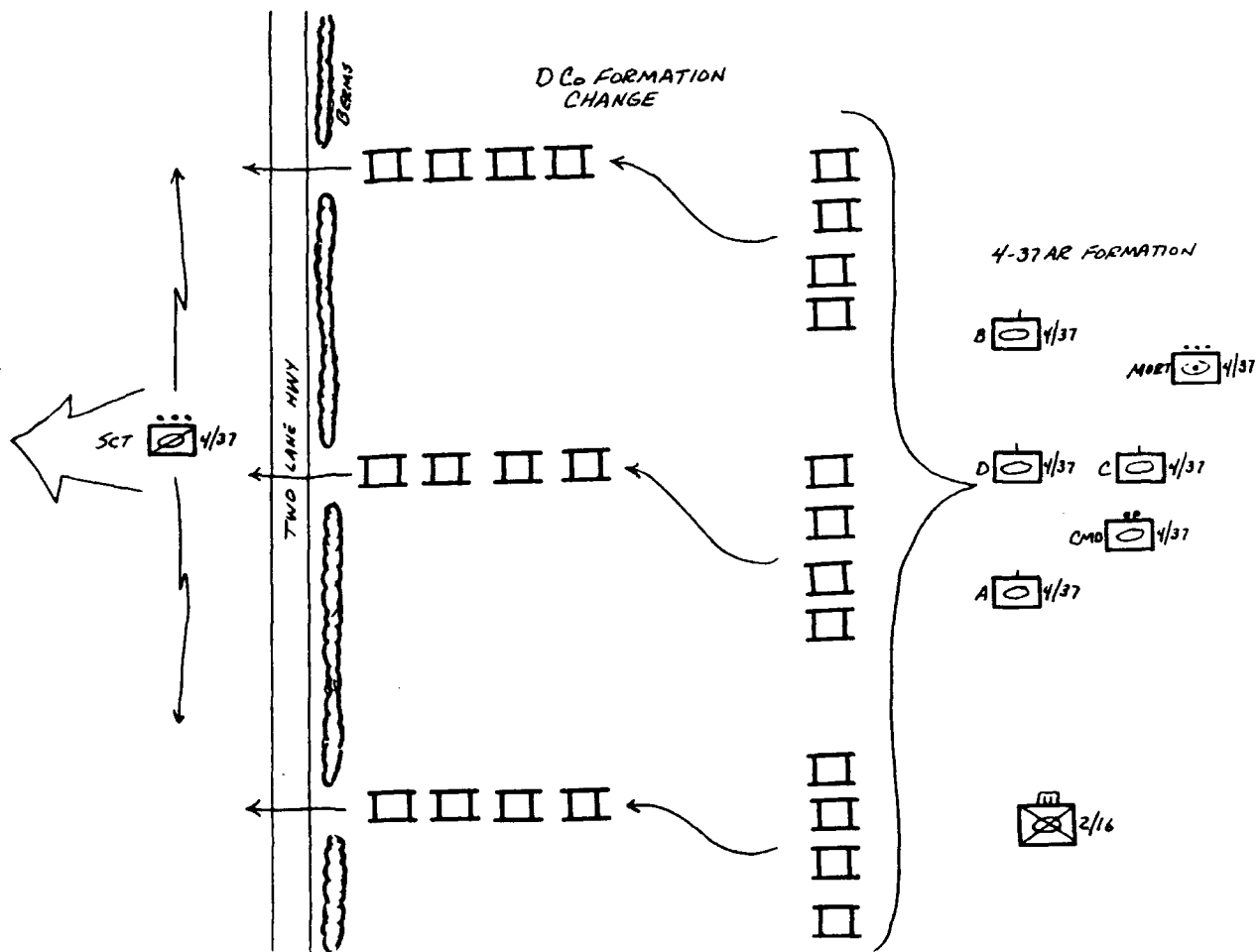


Diagram #59. Crossing the Berms and Highway.

I finally asked CPT Wock if he knew where he was going. When he told me on the radio he knew nothing of N5, I realized we were going the wrong way per brigade's instructions. I slowed the formation to five MPH, hoping TF 2-16 would catch up, but they never did. We had effectively cut thirty to forty kilometers from our route. We pulled in to AA Allen with about half the battalion and the refuel waiting.



Tanks from C Co arriving in AA Allen.

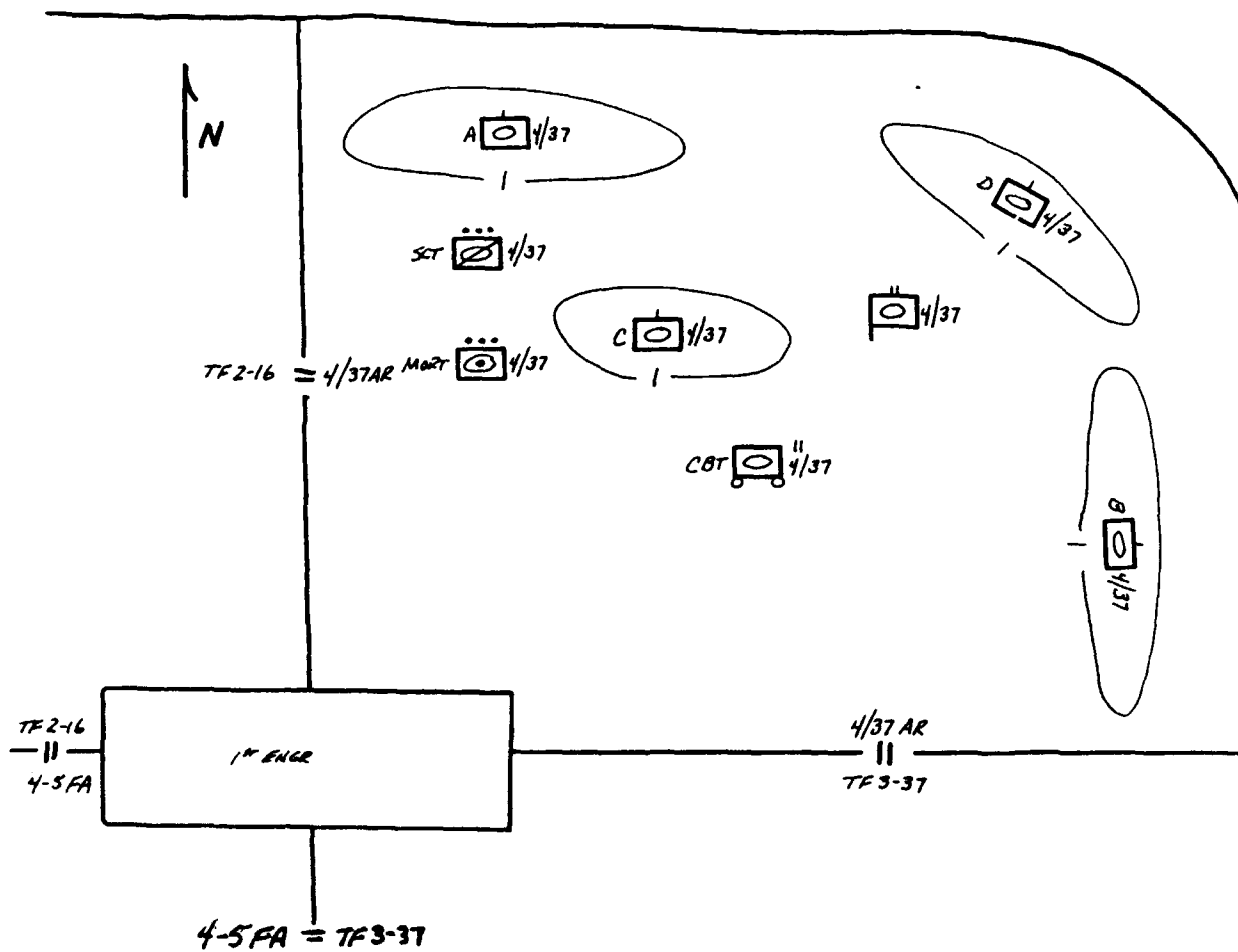


Diagram #60. The Battalion Assembly Area Allen.

Later, at a brigade command and staff meeting, COL Moreno joked with LTC Fake about him going the wrong way. As luck would have it, our mistake turned out to be the Brigade Commander's intent anyway.

Maintenance and Recovery

By sending our deadline tanks with the quartering party and leaving an operational vehicle with any vehicle falling out of the formation, we had excellent accountability on all the vehicles. Those personnel with GPSs and separate vehicles knew from experience our priority, as soon as we reached AA Allen, was to close ASAP.

Statement by CPT Martin, the B Co Commander, on the recovery of broken-down vehicles en route to AA Allen on 21 March 1991:

The battalion was closing on AA Allen and seemed to be only five kilometers short of the RP and fuel point. For the first time during the march, the commanders were asked, "What is our current combat status?" A Co reported five tanks, B Co reported five tanks, C Co had four tanks, and D Co boasted about his status of ten operational vehicles on hand. LTC Marlin was not pleased with these numbers (tone of voice on radio) and asked all commanders to see him at the refuel point.

We all went to LTC Marlin's HMMWV at the refuel point to reassure him all the vehicles were accounted for and we had a plan to get them back into AA Allen in twenty-four hours. B Co closed on its portion of the AA by 1200 hours. The problem we faced was waiting for our wheels and 1SGs to close on our AA so we could move back out to pick up B33, broken down and untowable. While waiting, D Co and C Co reported all tanks closed on AA Allen by 1400 hours.

At 1430 hours, 1SG Powell arrived at the fuel point with five tanks, an A Co tank, our medics and two HMMWVs. 1SG Powell got the parts needed from the

UMCP for B33 and moved over to our area to pick up LT Corbo and move out to B33.

As 1SG Powell moved to B33, LTC Marlin continued to ask where A12 was and who was going to police it up. CPT Beals had taken the mission to personally police it up, but had no radio contact with battalion headquarters.

For the next five and one-half hours, both A Co and B Co were periodically asked the status of A12 and B33. Unfortunately, both vehicles were out of radio range. At 1630 hours, I moved closer to B33 to get an update and found out that 1SG Powell estimated he should have B33 closed on AA Allen around 2000 hours. At approximately 2000 hours, both A12 and B33 were closed on AA Allen and the battalion was marching on with extensive maintenance operations.

Our success in rapid recovery came from orderly recovery plans and operations. As in B Co, all line units had pre-planned vehicles designated as tow tanks. We let our 1SGs take charge of all recovery operations and do their job without someone telling them how to do it.

I was proud of the effort the soldiers made to keep the battalion together. However, even at a glance, I knew we had as many as eight to ten tanks with major component problems. We managed to get all the vehicles into AA Allen before nightfall.

Only one tank was unaccounted for when we arrived at AA Allen. B33 dropped out of the initial quartering party. I recorded the location from CPT Bond and went out to the tank. They needed a front hub, bolts, and two road wheels. I stayed on the radio and with the crew until the parts showed. I knew as long as I stayed there, support personnel would move faster to come up with the parts. They had to borrow some parts from a tank in AA Allen to get B33 home.

The Scout Plt also located three pallets of new M113 APC track in the desert. We sent a truck and crew to police it up. We had a desperate need for M113 APC track.

At the UMCP, I conferred with CW3 LeMay and MAJ Garrity about our maintenance posture from the one hundred kilometer, no maintenance stop move. We had ten tanks down for major assemblies.

We did the impossible the first night. With our maintenance teams and the 201st MST we performed general support maintenance and rebuilt forward and rear modules ourselves. I could not believe what the soldiers accomplished in twenty-four hours. The soldiers worked all night. By morning, only three tanks were deadlined. I state this with no exaggeration whatsoever. By morning, several major components showed up from the 201st Fwd Spt Bn from previous job orders at Safwan. Within forty-eight hours after arriving at AA Allen, we had only one or two tanks deadlined on a daily basis.

We continued to report by the book maintenance standards. Several vehicles, like the Scout Plt's BFVs, remained on deadline for specific parts the entire war and redeployment, but did not miss a single move throughout the four months in theater.

COL Moreno instituted a policy of no parts substitutions to reduce the number of "hangar queens." A "hangar queen" was a long-term, deadlined vehicle stripped of parts to repair other deadlined vehicles. The choice was having six vehicles deadlined for six parts, or one vehicle deadlined for six parts.

When repair parts were not available and we had to tow deadlined vehicles one hundred kilometers cross-country and find additional transportation for the crews, it made sense to do part substitution. We were now being asked to turn off the priority maintenance program and the substitution program in order to attempt to get a handle on the repair parts system.

I had created two "hangar queens" when there was no other choice during and shortly after the war to maintain the battalion's combat readiness. I had no regret and would have done it again in a heartbeat under the circumstances. When there is no maintenance and repair part system in existence, a commander is obligated to "put together".as much combat power as humanly possible.



One of the maintenance teams set up in the UMCP.

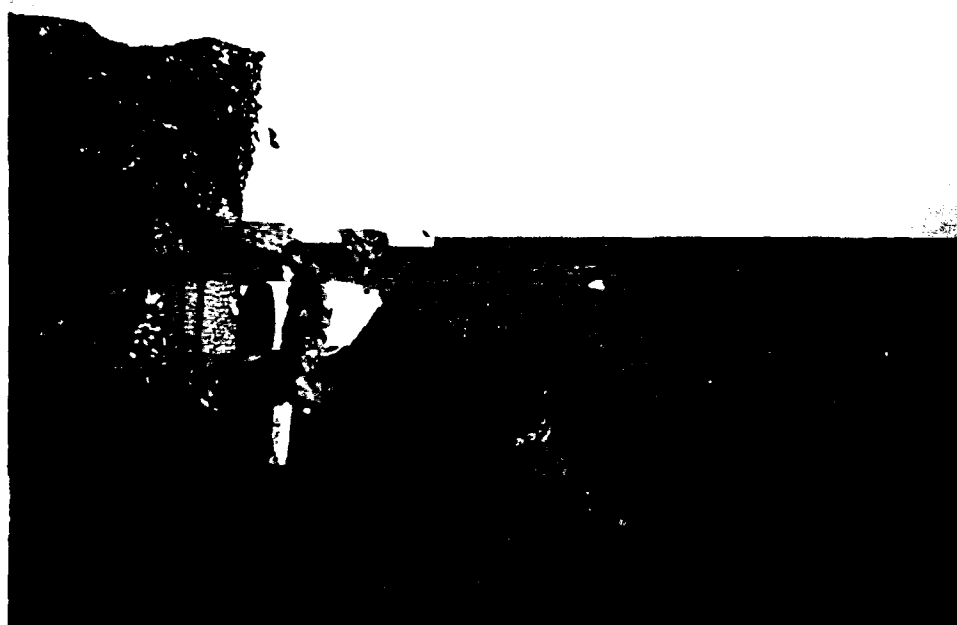


UMCP location and the road running from the TOC to the UMCP in AA Allen.

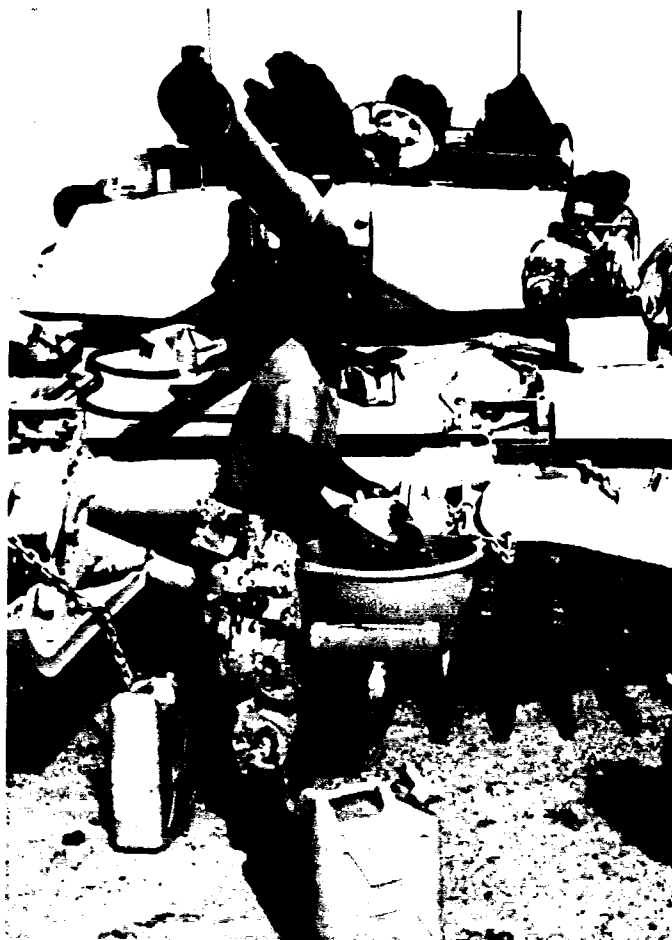
Life in Assembly Area Allen

Every time we moved, it took several days before we received mail and hot chow. The move to AA Allen on 21 March was no different. However, life at AA Allen was pleasant. It was the first time since the 17th of February that we were not in direct contact with the Iraqi Army. I gave instructions for the soldiers to remove their flak jackets. "Stand to" was stopped, and 1SGs started having regular morning formations. We set up camp to take care of the soldiers and clean up our gear. The telephones were about thirty minutes away and all the soldiers made calls home several times. We had hot chow twice

a day--breakfast and dinner--even if we did have chicken and rice on eleven consecutive nights.



LTC Marlin's tank at 0700 hours in the morning. SPC Goforth has the coffee pot on the fire. Soldiers mixed diesel with sand in an ammunition box to heat water. The crew found two easy chairs on top of Jabal Sanam Mountain and brought them to AA Allen.



SGT Keith L. Holmes from B Co doing his laundry. All the soldiers did their own laundry.

The PX runs started again and the soldiers were resupplied with cigarettes and snacks. We set up our camouflage nets, or what was left of them, for shade. Wind had shredded the nets and the fiberglass poles had all shattered. They were not durable enough for the desert environment. Everyone sought to create shade. The weather was warming up very quickly. It seemed that there was no spring. We went from winter to summer.



SGT Goff from C Co serving breakfast in the company position in AA Allen. Soldiers were still required to keep their Kelvar helmet, weapon, and protective mask with them at all times.

Soldiers had time to do laundry and recreational activities. Letters home were more frequent. Some days, the sky remained dark from the burning oil wells even though we were one hundred fifty-one miles from the coast. Care packages arrived from home and magazines and books arrived.

Soldiers designed their own showers and latrines. B Co designed the most creative shower. We wondered why we did not think of the idea a long time ago. We continued to send

soldiers on the "Love Boat" cruise when we were given rest and recreation allocations.

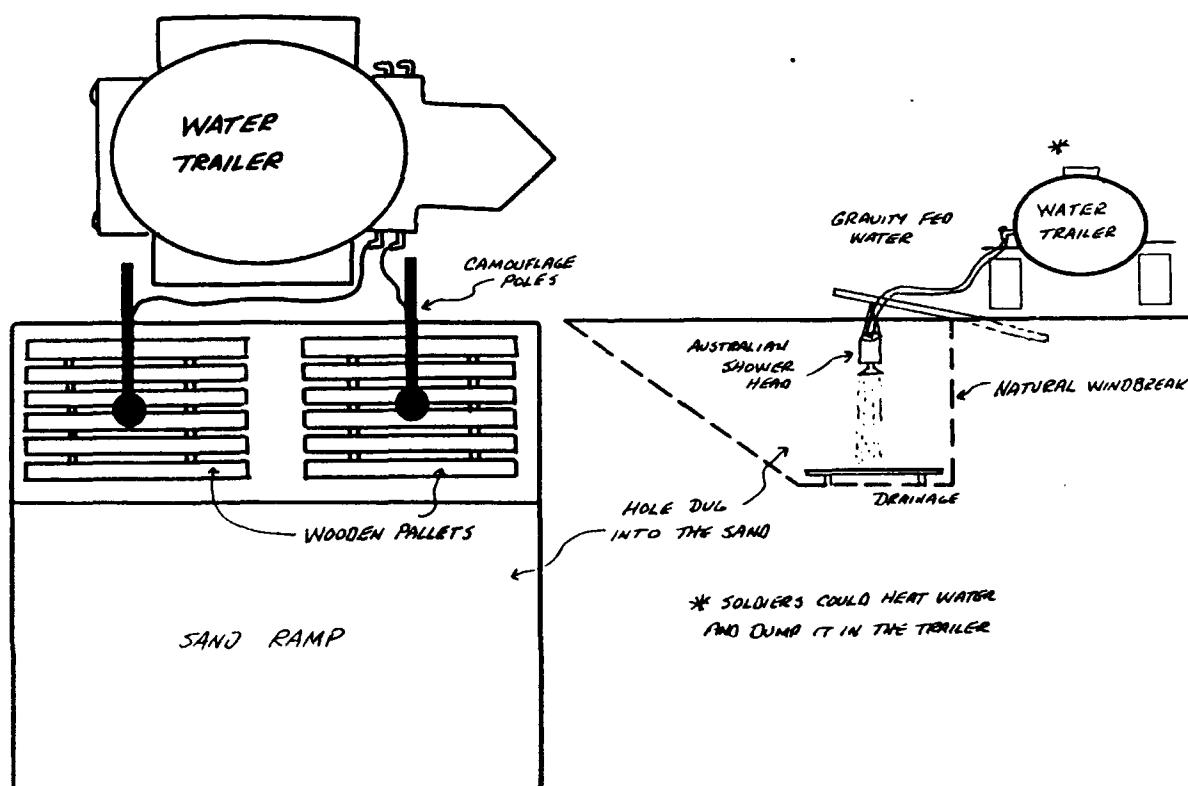
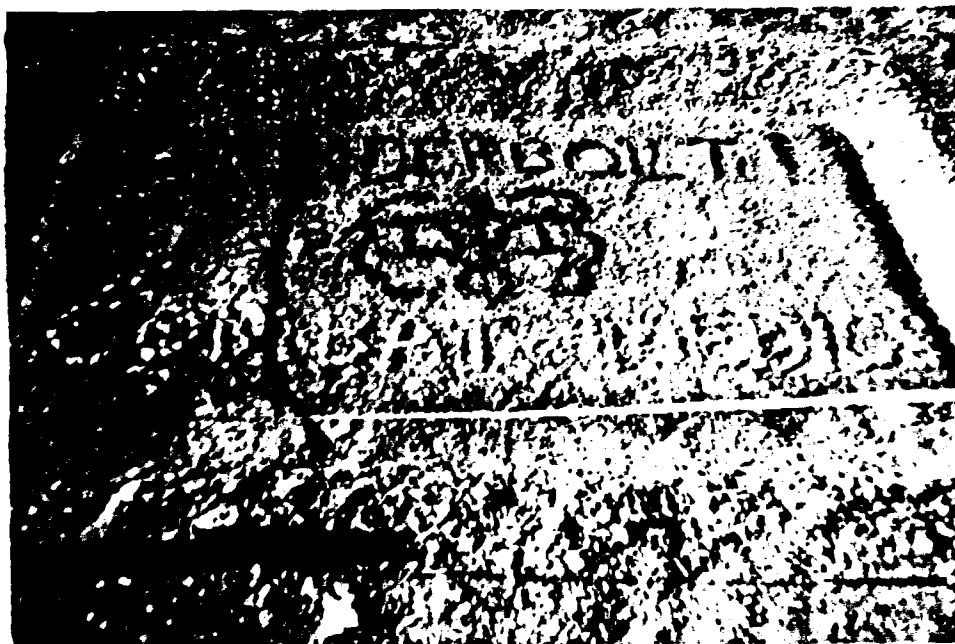


Diagram #61. The B Co Shower.

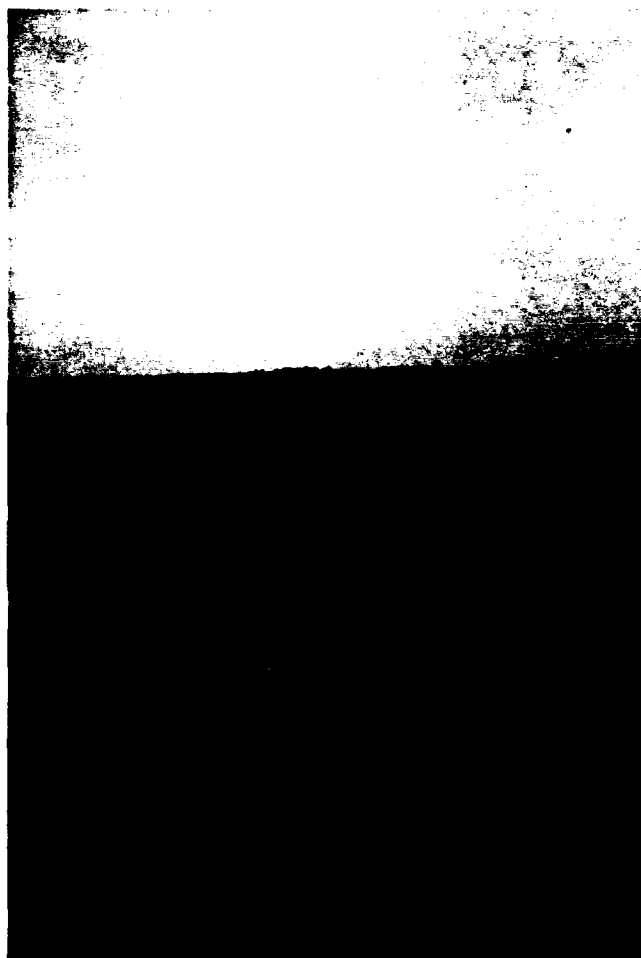


SFC Emanuel Arnold playing horseshoes in the company position in AA Allen. He is wearing a tankers NOMEX flameproof set of coveralls.

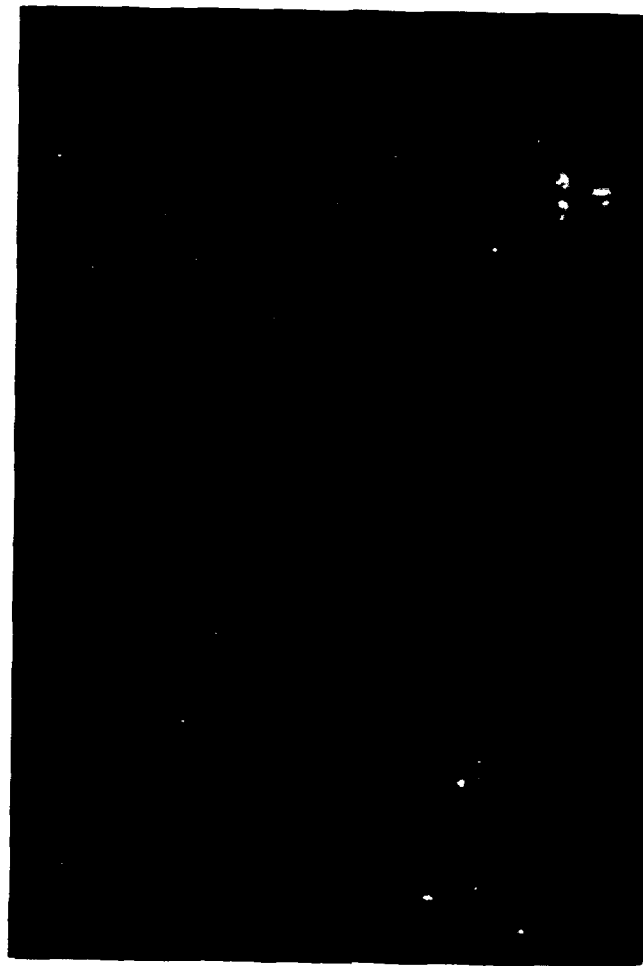


Decorative entrance for the BAS and the Medical Plt.

Soldiers had a way of making life bearable. A sense of humor was back and softball and volleyball tournaments began. I was sorry to report the officers lost the volleyball tournament two out of three games to the senior NCOs.



CW3 LeMay in the combat trains area of AA
Allen.



CPT Loche en route to executing a sanitary mission. The combination of a chair with no seat cushion and a shovel was about as comfortable as a soldier could hope for in this environment. Privacy depended on how far into the desert a person wanted to walk.

Several of the platoons found Iraqi tents and used them. This was perfectly acceptable. Most of our tentage, along with most of our recreational equipment and personal gear, was still in the MILVANS secured at the DISCOM location over one hundred kilometers to the south.

I visited the Scout Plt one day to find a tent set up in the middle of their lager. In the tent were two over-stuffed lounge chairs, a television, and a large generator to power the television. The television actually worked. They had found

these materials in a bunker in the middle of the desert en route to AA Allen.

KMAN radio station 101.5 from Manhattan, KS, sent us a large package of audio cassettes. Many of them were recordings from the station with dedications to the "Thunderbolts." Several of them were tapes of comedians. These were widely circulated. At AA Allen, we finally heard, for the first time, the "Voices That Care" song that was becoming so popular in the U.S.

Soldiers also speculated on a supposed \$10,000 bonus the Saudi Arabian government was going to award to each American soldier. There was never any basis for the rumor. We certainly did not encourage it, but the soldiers never stopped talking about it. Born capitalists! Junior officers were discontent with the "double standard" treatment they received with regard to their \$500 a month tax exempt status as compared to enlisted soldiers.

New Friends

I do not know if the weather or the change in our geographic location brought us the new friends. They came in the form of camels, snakes, rats, and dung beetles. The camels were frequently seen throughout the area, as were the Bedouins. I suspect they came as a team.



Camels in AA Allen.

Where there are rats, there are also snakes. The sand vipers existed in this area. They were extremely poisonous and dangerous. In the daytime, they would bury themselves in the sand. If a mechanic crawled under a truck to work on it, he had to be very careful not to disturb the snake. A soldier from the 1st Engr Bn was bitten doing this. We found several snakes in our area and killed them.

The snakes' primary food was the desert rat. I woke up one morning and stood outside my HMMWV. The sun was just starting to rise. I looked down at my feet. In the darkness, it looked like the sand was moving. I had about three or four desert rats running around my boots.

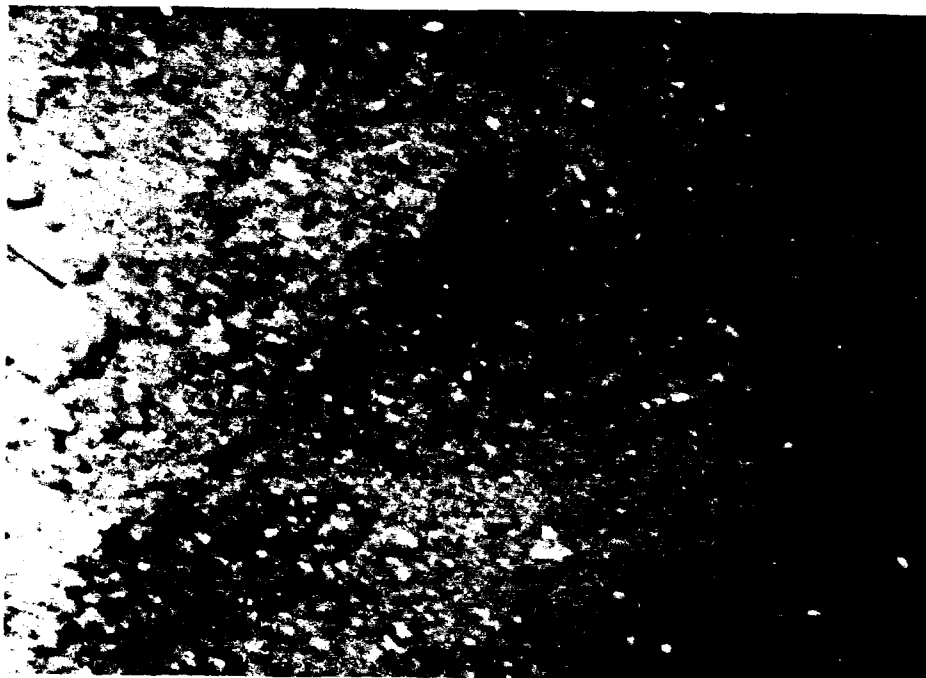


A desert rat from AA Allen. This particular rat took up residence in a tank's road wheel. He got the nickname "Hardtime" by the crew.

The dung beetle came as a shocker to most soldiers. These beetles lived in the area. They burrowed into holes in the sand. When they smelled dung, they flew to the source. Many a tanker was seen running with his trousers around his ankles and a roll of toilet tissue in his hand when the beetles flew in for the attack. The dung beetle secured the dung and then rolled it across the desert to his home. These events were extremely comical and harmless.

After a few days in AA Allen, no one ever took a stool at night time. Efforts were made to get out of the wind. The dung

beetle grew in size from about one-half inch to two or three inches. They flew so fast they were hard to see, even in daylight hours.



A dung beetle in AA Allen.

Scrounging Repair Parts

The harder the battalion tried to get parts, the less we received. I organized a five truck convoy with CPT Hall as the OIC. His mission was to find the items on the shopping list we had put together. He was gone for almost five days and returned with all the trucks full of needed materials. He brought HMMWV tires, tank engines, three rear modules, fifty tank road wheels,

spare track blocks, Class III package products, and much, much more.

The division main support battalion could not help him, so he went to the Corps Support Command (COSCOM) and theater level logistics bases. CPT Hall filled out DA form 2765s on the spot for everything. The only question he was asked was, "How many do you need," or "How many can you carry?" We welcomed the repair parts, but I was still distressed as to how our system in theater was so messed up. By the time CPT Hall returned, the next convoy with a new officer in charge was ready to roll. Same mission.

We continued to use this system to "get healthy" on repair parts. We never did get M113 APC road wheels. They were nowhere to be found. We tried every trick in the book, including a visit to the battle-damaged vehicles. They were already stripped by others.

Statement by CPT Hall, the Battalion S4, describing his efforts to get supplies for the battalion on or about 23 March 1991:

Again, the war was over, but day after day, I would listen to all the logistical wizards state that there were no critical major assemblies in theater (forward modules, rear modules, road wheels, track, etc.). I got tired of listening to these individuals who had absolutely no clue what was and what was not on hand. So I took it upon myself to search for the items we needed.

To make a long story short, I discovered Logistics Base Texas while doing a reconnaissance of RAA Huebner. I saw a very cute female walking around without a brassiere. She was walking towards an area with hundreds of large green containers (the type of containers for major assemblies). So I stopped her and asked how I could get some of the containers. She

said if I would give her a ride to the container area, she would help me. This female turned out to be the soldier in charge of distribution of major assemblies for the VII Corps.

After a long talk with her, she agreed to help me. I made a total of four trips to Logistics Base Texas. The total trip was six hundred plus miles round trip. The trips almost broke me physically because no sooner did I make one trip, then I would turn around to make another. I would have made more trips, but once brigade found out what I was doing. They told division, who sent a representative to Logistics Base Texas, and all major assembly requests had to go through him. Needless to say, brigade and division messed up a good thing.

This female soldier continued to help me even after division established a liaison officer. All of our transactions were done at night so no one could see us.

The only other item we were never successful in obtaining through the system or by "come hell or high water" was replacement boots. Over a six week period, we asked for help and followed up every instruction or lead given us to locate boots for our soldiers. Two of our soldiers were using green Army tape around the soles to keep the sand out. We went to extremes no sound person would consider, and still no boots.

I was disappointed when I saw virtually every senior officer and some non-commissioned officers in the higher headquarters' staffs wearing the new desert boot, knowing I had soldiers needing replacements. This type of behavior did not go unnoticed by the soldiers. I told my officers I had better not see them wearing new boots unless they could produce a pair for the soldiers needing them. Soldiers shared their spare boots within companies to take care of our own. If they had time to

get a pair for themselves, they had time and resources to find a pair for a soldier needing them. Supply discipline was non-existent and was not focused forward.

Statement by CPT Hall, the Battalion S4, describing his efforts at obtaining boots on 23 March 1991:

Once the war was over, I went back to 701st Main Spt Bn and KKMC in search of boots and other TA-50 items. 701st Main Spt Bn was being as helpful as always and said they did not have any desert boots for issue--despite wherever we looked in 701st Main Spt Bn, their soldiers had (to include their brigade staff) desert boots. Additionally, everyone back at KKMC had desert boots, but they, too, said they did not have any boots for issue.

It was not until I found a soldier in 701st Main Spt Bn with access to desert boots that I was able to get three hundred plus pairs of boots. This soldier did not want to give me the boots through normal supply channels because he knew they were in high demand and he could trade various items for them. After talking to this soldier for a couple of minutes, it dawned on me what his game was. I traded some captured Iraqi TA-50 for the boots. Once the transaction was completed, I told Central Investigating Directorate (CID) what this soldier was doing and left the matter in their hands.

A total of four convoys were sent out on scrounging missions, and all returned full. We received most of what we needed and, in some cases, a few spares. Things were looking better all around.

When MG Rhame visited the battalion on 1 April, he appeared to have a different outlook on maintenance. This was my perception. He supposedly proclaimed himself as the ADC(S) for supply and logistics since our last meeting. I was also informed by COL Moreno that MG Rhame's guidance was to get it done any way we could--legally!

Easter Sunday

On Easter Sunday, I had B Co move their tanks around CPT Bacon's altar. This provided all the soldiers a kind of amphitheater. I also announced I would be giving a command information briefing after the service. We managed to get maximum attendance.

What a beautiful day! The sun came up behind the three crosses set up by the chaplain. All the soldiers participated in the service. I think it made all the soldiers aware of home and country and God. We all had a lot to be thankful for.

Statement by CPT Bacon, the Battalion Chaplain, describing Easter Sunday Services on 31 March 1991:

The sun came up over the Iraqi desert this morning. It was beautiful--a bright orange ball of fire as the backdrop to three crosses constructed out of camouflage poles. Our cathedral for this Easter Sunday was built of steel. LTC Marlin had CPT Martin form an amphitheater with Bravo Co's M1 tanks. The pews of the church were the tanks and the desert sand. I even used the field altar this morning. The parament was Pentecost red, but here we make do with what we have.

We sang songs and hymns as best we could. I preached a short homily. We prayed, thanking God for our success and that no one in the battalion had been killed. We prayed, asking God to continue to be with all of the folks back home and to do His best to speed up our redeployment to Kansas. Finally, we asked God for healing in the Mideast.

After our prayers, we shared Holy Communion together. With over six hundred soldiers in the battalion and most of them present, this was the largest worship service I have ever led.

For most of us, Easter Sunrise services included Easter morning breakfast. We had Easter breakfast this morning as a battalion after the worship service. It was excellent food and fellowship in the middle of the sands of Iraq.

Some people would argue that God is dead. Some folks would never think to look for God any place but back home in church. But God was here this morning in the Iraqi desert. God was in the love, joy, and faith of these soldiers.



Chaplain Bacon having a sunrise Easter service in AA Allen.

After the service, SFC Wilson put out a brunch that knocked our eyes out. I do not have the slightest idea where he came up with all the foodstuffs, but it was a banquet. After the brunch, we had a photo-taking session for all persons interested. Softball and volleyball were played later.



SFC Gallow, SFC Woodard, LT Powers, CPT
Wock, 1SG Hurley, 1SG Lightsey at Sunday
brunch.



SFC Hill and SFC Samuels at Sunday brunch.



SSG Clarence Black, CW3 LeMay, and MSG
Patton at Sunday brunch.



CPT Hall and MAJ Cook at Sunday brunch.



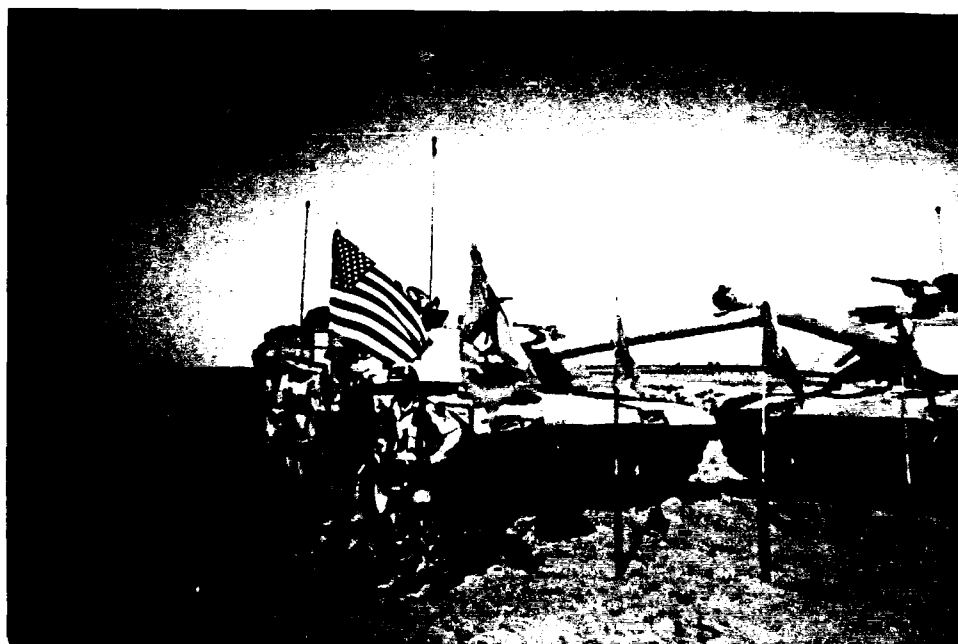
Soldiers at Sunday brunch after the Easter sunrise service.



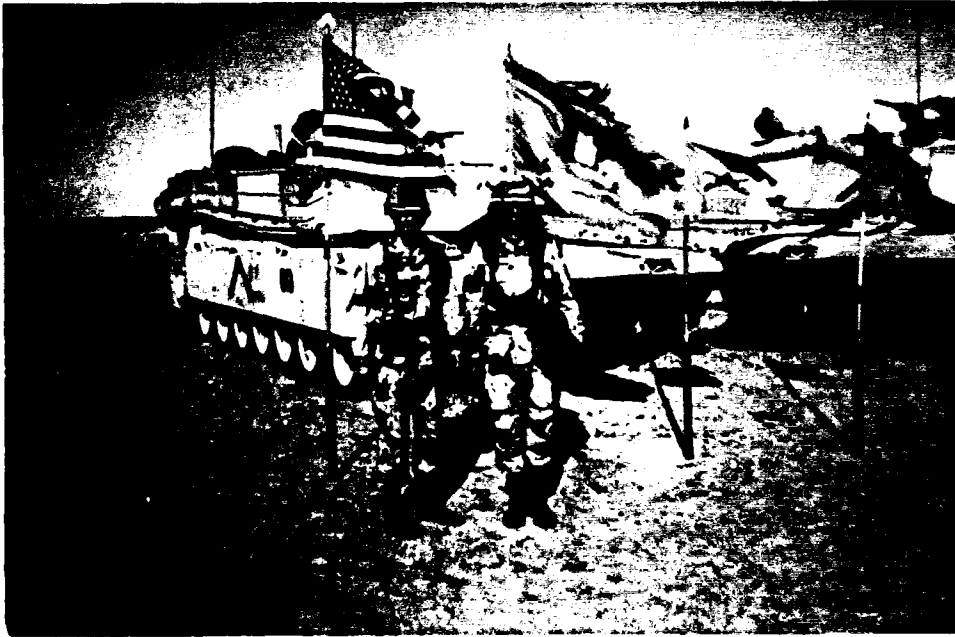
CSM Stockton serving CPT Torrence at Sunday
brunch.



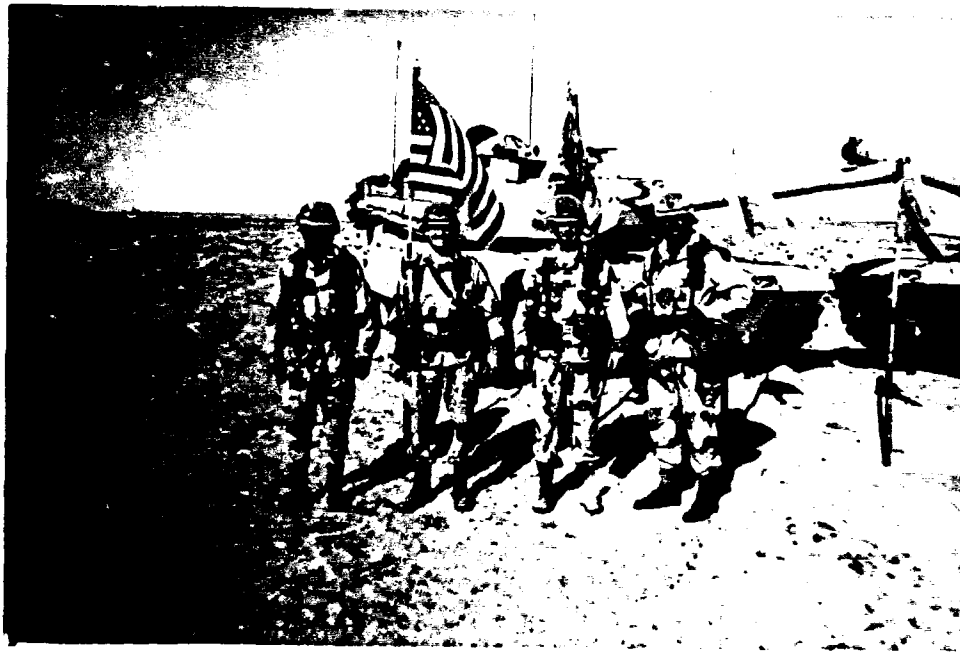
SFC Day, SFC Patrick H. Ewers, SFC Neff, and SFC James C. Williams at Sunday brunch. Battalion TOC in the background. Hardly noticeable is the directional antenna set up by LT Okiyama to communicate with RAA Huebner on the AM radio.



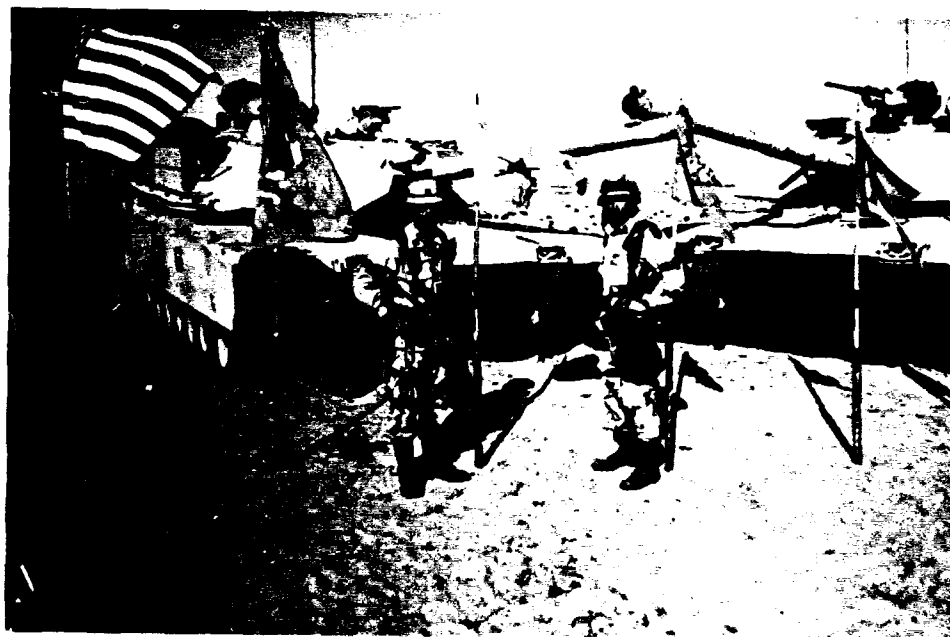
LTC Marlin and CSM Stockton with the national and battalion colors in AA Allen.



MAJ Cook and SGM Neel at AA Allen.



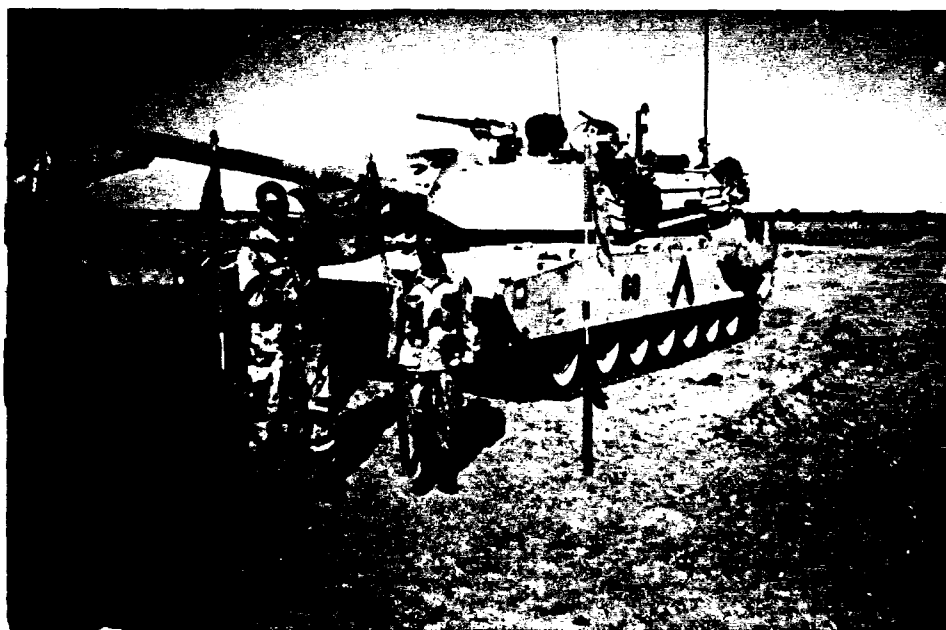
CPT Loche, CPT Williams, MAJ Cook, and CPT Hall--the battalion staff at AA Allen.



CPT Clidas and 1SG Thiede at AA Allen.



CPT Martin and 1SG Powell at AA Allen.



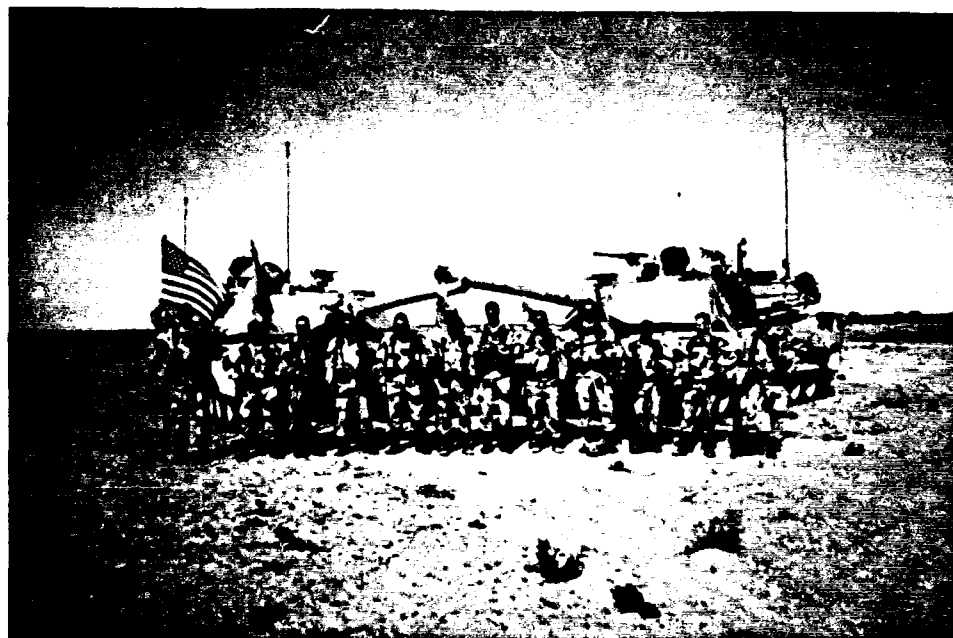
CPT Torrence and 1SG Macasio at AA Allen.



LTC Marlin, CPT Clidas, CPT Beals, CPT
Martin, CPT Torrence, and CPT Wock at AA
Allen.



CSM Stockton, 1SG Thiede, 1SG Hurley, 1SG Powell, 1SG Macasio, 1SG Lightsey, and SGM Neel at AA Allen.



LTC Marlin, CSM Stockton, CPT Clidas, 1SG Thiede, CPT Beals, 1SG Hurley, CPT Martin, 1SG Powell, CPT Torrence, 1SG Macasio, CPT Wock, and 1SG Lightsey at AA Allen.

Award Recommendations

We submitted our initial award recommendations in Safwan. Per the guidance, we submitted fifty-six soldiers for BSM for valor and one hundred fifty soldiers for ARCOM for valor. We submitted over four hundred soldiers for a BSM for service and two hundred soldiers for an ARCOM for service. We submitted these with a standard statement and the belief they would be automatically approved. The number of our award recommendations was in line with the other battalions.

At Safwan, MAJ Garrity was selected by COL Moreno to represent the brigade on the division awards board. This was the first indication I had of a board of officers processing and voting on awards. I was learning the system the hard way. I also felt our award recommendations were realistic and fair. We had no recommendations for any higher award than a BSM for valor, and I made the Company Commanders do a review for acts of valor. They were being modest and I truly felt they were not aware of the significance of their soldiers' achievements. We spent a lot of time on award recommendations. We recognized their importance to the soldiers.

At AA Allen, MAJ Garrity attended the award board meetings. He was disappointed with the criteria being used by the board and was not overly impressed with the other board members. He was the only officer on the board who had served on the front lines during the war. Because I had personally handled the award recommendations with the Company Commanders and the adjutant, he was not totally aware of our complete package of submissions. He kept me apprised of the board's progress. Our BSM for valor recommendations were the last ones reviewed by the board. All of them except MAJ Garrity's were disapproved.

MAJ Garrity came and talked to me about our award disapprovals. We had a major disconnect. I thought he was talking about the original twelve BSM for valor recommendations, and he had no knowledge of the other forty-four recommendations. After this conversation, he spoke separately with the Company

Commanders for any further recommendations. Of course, they had no more recommendations.

In reality, the board president, through MAJ Garrity, had sent a letter back with the award recommendations seeking witness statements. We were not aware on the first write-ups of the requirement for witness statements. MAJ Garrity returned to the board with no additional information on our recommendations and the board disapproved the awards. Later, I received the disapproval notices with a nasty note from the board president saying this was his third attempt to get witness statements. A conversation with MAJ Garrity made me realize we had made an unintentional error.

I found out a BSM for valor was approved for me. Next, we were notified that the commanding general would make all BSM for valor presentations. What a nightmare--the Battalion Commander and the Battalion XO standing out in front of the battalion receiving the only valor awards!!! With the help and cooperation of COL Moreno, we went back to the drawing board and singled out those individuals deserving of a valor award. COL Moreno carried my case, complete with all the correct documentation, to MG Rhame and justified the awarding of BSM for valor for eight individuals.

The ARCOM for valor recommendations did not meet with automatic approval either. COL Moreno and I ended up boarding each award. In short, we had to justify acts of individual valor to him for each recommendation before he would concur with approval of the award. Seventy ARCOMs for valor were approved.

I was not pleased with my performance in the award recommendation process. I expended an excessive amount of energy and time to achieve results I thought deserving of our soldiers. My lack of initial knowledge on the procedures and modifications on the initial guidance left me feeling inadequate. I felt every soldier in the battalion should have been awarded the BSM for service. I felt every soldier I submitted for a valor award should have received the award. Our recommendations should have been better prepared at battalion level to justify the award to the board.

3rd Brigade Change of Command

I tried to visit my friend, LTC John S Brown III, on the 28th of March. LTC Brown and I had been friends for twenty-seven years. From the ninth grade through high school, we attended school and participated in sports together. He was the commander of the 3rd Bn, 66th Ar, in the 3rd Bde, 2nd Ar Div (FWD). I had not seen him the entire war, though I had sent him some messages. We shared many experiences in our twenty year career and occasionally crossed paths.

I drove about fifty kilometers in my HMMWV only to find he had departed the area and headed north. On our return to the battalion, I found a destroyed jet decoy along the road. Later, I found over one hundred, unexploded, two hundred fifty pound bombs. I reported it to brigade.



Destroyed Iraqi jet decoy on a lonely stretch of road in middle of Iraq.

COL Moreno called me on the 3rd of April and asked if I wanted to attend the 3rd Bde's change of command. I met him at the brigade TOC and we flew north in a helicopter. After a thirty minute flight, we arrived on the line of demarcation. The 3rd Bde had a full formation planned with a backdrop of combat vehicles lined up.

BG Rutherford had his change of command and was awarded the Legion of Merit. After the ceremony, I had the chance to talk with LTC Brown and a number of old friends. The reception was in a tent on a hill. I felt like I was at a reunion. We took a number of photographs. The roll of film used to record these

events was mailed home to Peggy, just like all the rest. It was the one roll of film removed from the envelope before she received it.

COL Moreno and I also picked up a number of sea shells found in the area. These were indications of the water level centuries ago when the entire area was part of the sea.

Sand Storms

Every so often, a sand storm (a shamal) hit the area. Our visibility was limited from five hundred to one thousand meters. Everyone wore a mask made from a scarf. The sand was so fine we could not see it. It was in the air. If we tried to write a letter, the ink pen skipped about every third word. Every few written words required the writer to brush off his paper with his hand. The sand was so fine, it infiltrated everything.

Visit to Rear Assembly Area Huebner

On 4 April, I drove to division headquarters and caught a helicopter to RAA Huebner. I visited all the soldiers and gave a command information talk in a tent. We had about thirty-five soldiers at RAA Huebner. The maintenance of the vehicles brought to RAA Huebner was improved. Only two vehicles were still deadlined at the time of the visit.

The site was greatly improved and ready for our arrival. All of the tents were up and an arms room was set up. They even constructed a plywood wash rack in anticipation of washing all our canvas before redeployment home.

Most of the soldiers were in good hands. They enjoyed a lot of comforts not shared by the men in AA Allen. At the same time, they were anxious to rejoin their unit. I really enjoyed my time with the soldiers. We had a good question and answer session.

After the flight back to AA Allen, I prepared to leave the area when MG Rhame appeared. We had a long discussion in his van. I had solicited his opinion earlier on career counseling and the Army War College. I really appreciated his time. We were fortunate to have had him as our commander during the war. I considered him highly qualified as a war fighter. On the way back to AA Allen, I stopped at the commercial telephone site and let SPC Goforth make a phone call and get a Wolf Burger.

Live Fire Training

In AA Allen, we set up a small arms range to the east of the AA. Over a period of one week, we cycled all the soldiers through the small arms range. Each soldier was able to fire his individual weapon and crew-served weapon. Training never stopped--and it never should. This also allowed us to expend our loose, unpackaged ammunition meaningfully.

We finally turned in our Tier II ammunition at AA Allen. This freed up the trucks as far as cargo space. Piece by piece, we were unravelling all the items we had put together to fight the war.

Day-to-Day Business and Visitors

After suffering through my second eye sand scratch endured during the war, we seemed to have a steady flow of visitors in AA Allen. COL Moreno had the Battalion Commanders meet with a reporter from the Army Times after one of our nightly brigade command and staff meetings. I do not recall having a lot to say--seems everyone else was doing all the talking.

On or about 6 April, a CID special agent showed up. I was not present and MAJ Garrity dealt with him. He was looking for a white TMP pick-up truck borrowed by C Co. This was the truck LT Wiser had borrowed in port to help transport the company to and from port. On the night of the first air attacks, a series of events resulted in C Co leaving the truck in port with the keys locked inside the cab. Now the truck was missing. This incident would keep us busy right up to our day of departure. In the end, no criminal intent was found and the truck was surveyed by the TMP.

A Training Command (TRADOC) CALL team showed up on or about 7 April. The team consisted of a representative from every branch school except the Logistics Center. The visit was for only two hours and then they departed. We had the impression we were telling them things they had already heard. They were surprised when we informed them the logistics CALL team had not visited us. It reinforced our suspicions that the Logistics Center CALL team did not want to talk to us. The logistics CALL team did not visit anyone below division level.

Beginning the 1st of April, I chaired an after action review of our operations to date. I had all the battalion staff and all the Company Commanders gather in the TOC at 1300 hours. Starting at AA Allen, we worked backward reviewing a segment of our experiences for one hour. At the end of the hour, I assigned each person a vignette to write regarding the operation being discussed. They were not allowed to leave the TOC until the vignette was complete. The vignettes were placed in envelopes and sealed. I wanted to preserve our history. Little did I realize I would use these vignettes later to construct a detailed account of the battalion in Operation Desert Storm.

We purged all the soldiers' baggage and vehicles of any unauthorized Iraqi equipment and souvenirs. Major pieces of equipment were destroyed and buried prior to departing AA Allen. We were continually reducing the chance of any soldier possessing anything dangerous and unauthorized.

The Red Cross messages were becoming more and more absurd. With the war over, every pregnant wife, friend, lover, or parent who thought they had an excuse to get the soldier home earlier was sending messages through the Red Cross. Some Red Cross messages were sincere and truthful; others became nonsense. I suspect some soldiers even encouraged or put people up to contacting the Red Cross in hopes of getting out of the desert sooner. Some were very creative and imaginative; some were outrageous to the point of being humorous.

We set up an exchange program with the 4th Bde. We sent two Company Commanders to stay with the aviation battalion

(Apache) for a few days and they sent several of their officers to stay with us. We originally planned to send CPT Torrence and CPT Wock. CPT Torrence went first. Upon his return, the aviation units had a change of mission and the exchange was called off.

Statement by CPT Torrence, the C Co Commander, describing his visit with the 1st Sqdn, 1st Aviation, on 12 April 1991:

During the time in AA Allen, I got a chance to go back to spend five days with the 1st Sqdn, 1st Aviation "Gunfighters." The program was instituted to give commanders a chance to cross pollinate ideas and familiarize ground commanders with the day-to-day activities and tactics of the attack helicopters.

After arriving, I discovered their life, although not perfect, was somewhat more comfortable than ours. For the first time in four months, I had an ice cold soda. The company I was with had tents and cots for all the soldiers, and the Company Commander even had his own computer. I also learned they experienced a lot of the same problems we experienced with fuel, repair parts, and resupply during the ground war. I felt the trip was very productive.

Because the aviation branch was formed during the mid-1980's, the number of officers with ground force experience was dwindling. By the end of the visit, I had made some new friends and hopefully showed the pilots our ground operations were somewhat more complex than lining up and driving into the face of the enemy.

CSM Stockton held a combat promotion board. I was constantly impressed by CSM Stockton's efforts. He and the rest of the senior NCOs were true professionals and truly set the example for their soldiers. Two of my tank crew went before the board. It was impressive to see the effort these young men were making to present themselves to the board. It was also

impressive to see the young NCOs training and assisting in their preparation for the board.

We had three senior NCOs with deferred retirements due to Desert Storm. SFC Martindale, SFC Wilson, and SFC Hill were involuntarily extended. With the hostilities at an end, VII Corps had left it up to the chain of command to decide who was allowed to return early. Only SFC Martindale wanted to return to Ft. Riley. Initially, I agreed to his departure. I changed my mind later and personally informed him of my decision and my rationale. As it turned out, forty-eight hours later, VII Corps policy changed and none of these soldiers were allowed to return earlier than the rest of the unit.

Safety stayed our number one priority. My greatest fear was receiving a call on the radio of a soldier being injured. We had come so far--successfully. My personal goal, as a commander, was to get all of my soldiers home safely.

On 10 April, I received a call about an injured soldier. PFC Leonard R. Braybory, a tank driver, had his head caught in the tank turret. His jaw and face were fractured. He was lucky to be alive. We sent him out on a MEDAVAC ASAP. I was constantly impressed by our medical team. We continued to watch out for each other and stress safety.

Contingency Plans

As the VII Corps reserve, we were prepared to execute combat missions. We had two Contingency Plans (CONPLANS)

assigned to the battalion. Both of these plans took us back to the line of demarcation in support of 3rd Bde or 1st Ar Div.

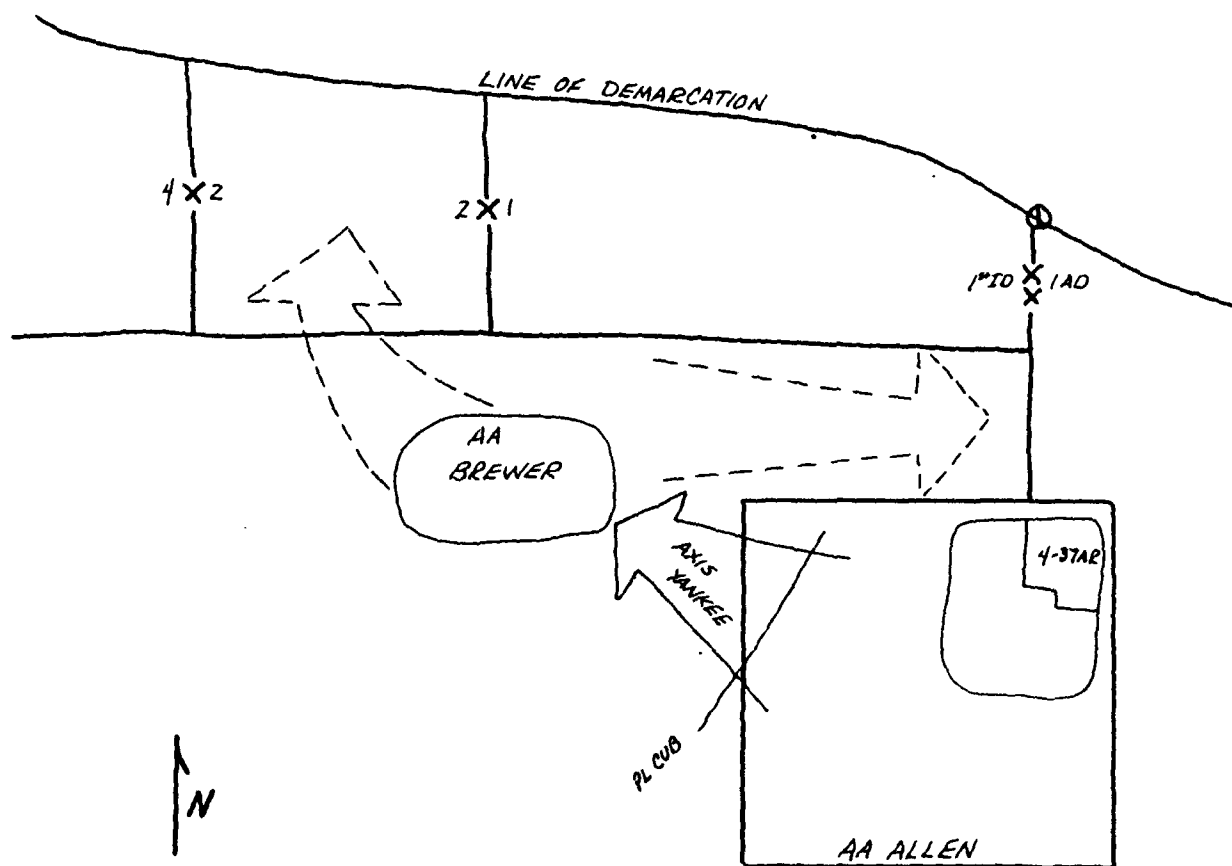


Diagram #62. CONPLANS as the VII Corps Reserve.

Fortunately, we never had to execute either of these two plans. However, on a daily basis, we were always dealing with the uncertainty of the next move. Seldom did we know when the next move would occur or where it would take us. The thought of moving north instead of south was depressing.

CHAPTER 17

REAR ASSEMBLY AREA HUEBNER

15 APRIL 1991 - 27 APRIL 1991

Movement to Rear Assembly Area Huebner

We received orders to depart AA Allen on 15 April 1991. The move was scheduled in three phases. Phase I took us about one hundred ten kilometers due south. We stopped in the vicinity of the original PL New Jersey. Phase II was another one hundred ten kilometers due south. We passed through the "berm" and stopped for the night north of the Tapline Road. Phase III took us about forty kilometers into RAA Huebner.

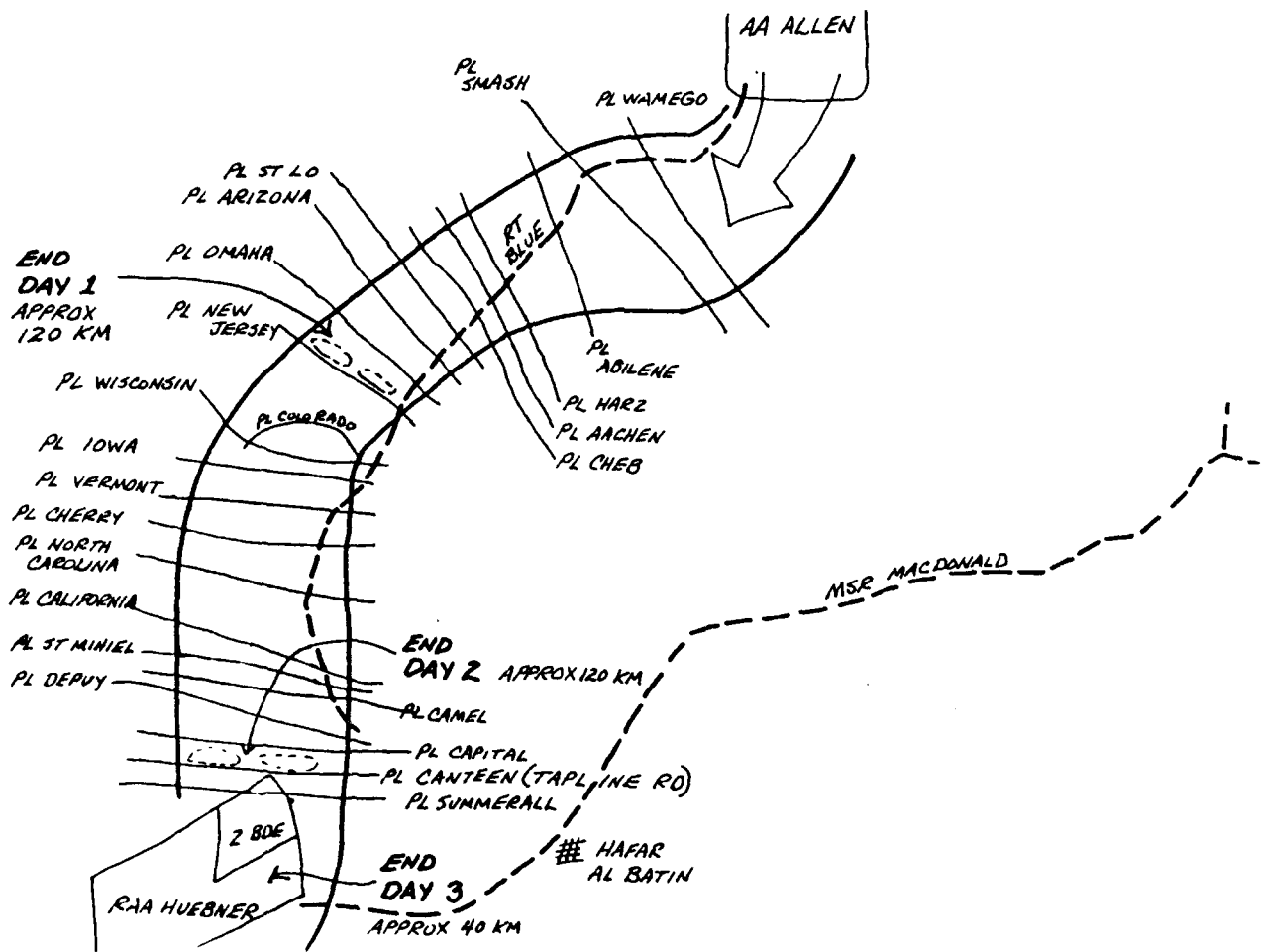


Diagram #63. Movement Plan to RAA Huebner.

I knew this would be a very tough move for the battalion. The condition and age of the tanks and the distance were extremely taxing on all of us. This would also be exceptionally tough on the tank crews with bad tracks.

We approached our LD time. We were supposed to keep Route Blue on our west flank and TF 2-16 on our east flank. We were instructed not to cross to the west side of Route Blue. Furthermore, Route Blue was in use with wheel traffic and was nothing more than a road cut in the sand by a grader. TF 3-37 was on the east flank of TF 2-16. This meant three battalions on line. The difficulty was to avoid getting pinched between TF 2-16 and Route Blue if the brigade formation shifted inadvertently too far to the west.

When we started, there were no problems. About five kilometers into the move, we could not identify TF 2-16's location. We suddenly realized they were in the wrong place. They were on our west flank. The battalion was in a box formation with C Co and A Co leading and D Co and B Co trailing.

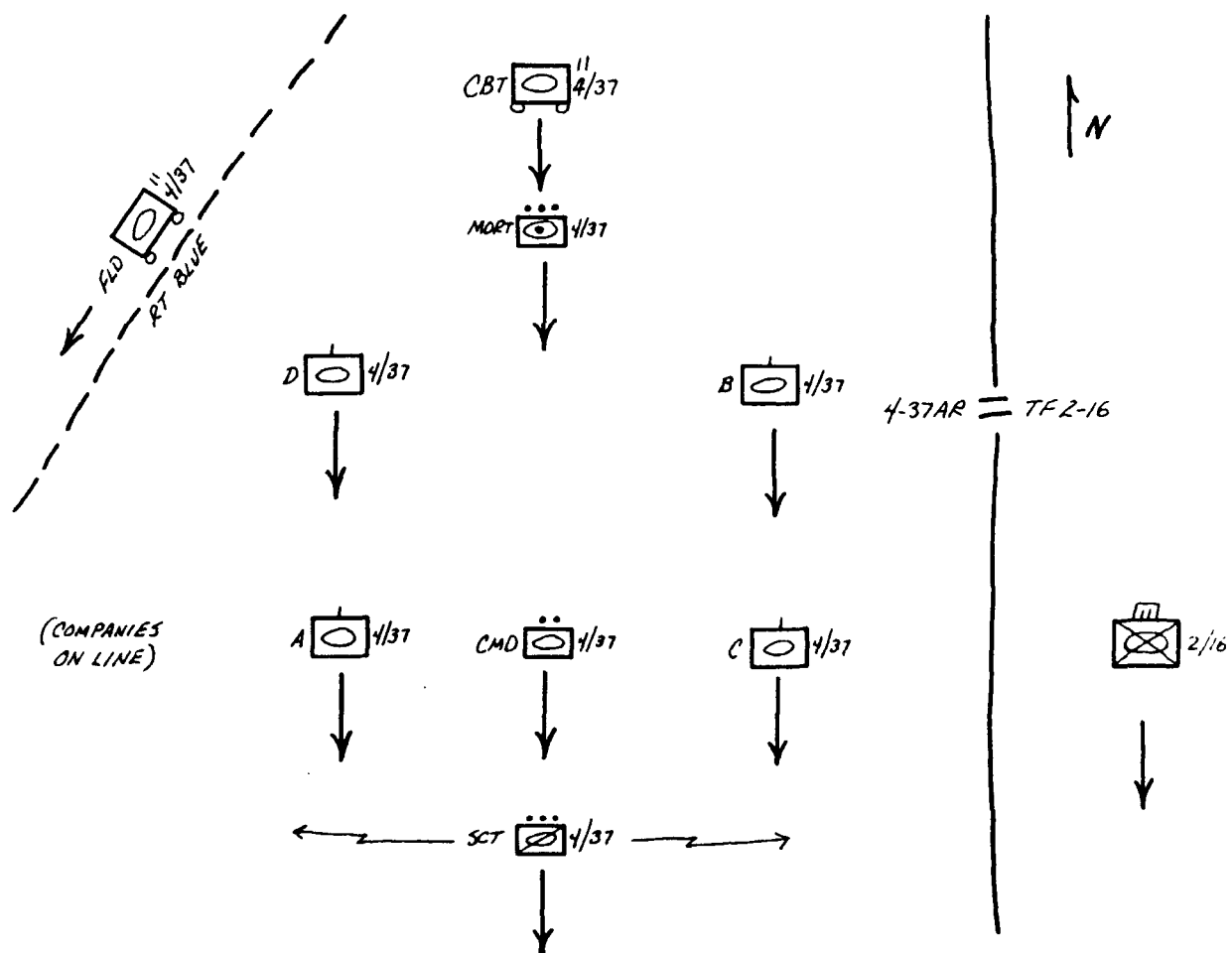


Diagram #64. Battalion Formation to RAA Huebner.



An aerial photo of the battalion departing AA Allen and heading south. Note the sand dust trail. This was hard on air filter systems.

I talked with TF 2-16 on the brigade radio net. They realized they were in the wrong location and cut to the east across our rear. Within thirty-five minutes, they were back in formation.

Our move was smooth and uneventful. Because of our comments to brigade about the no maintenance stop moving to AA Allen, we had a maintenance stop scheduled. At our first maintenance stop, we had only one tank dropping out due to a broken track. It was being recovered. At the maintenance stop, we checked all the oil levels, shook out the air filter V-packs,

and let the engines cool. Some tanks had only one fuel pump operating, so we refueled these vehicles with the fuel HEMMT trailing us for this purpose.



MAJ Cook and his tank moving as part of the Command Group. Notice the volume of sand being kicked up by the tank. Goggles and face masks were the order of the day.



Photo of A Co moving across the desert to RAA Huebner. The sand in this region was especially soft and loose.

After the maintenance stop, the battalion followed a route going south over the same route of their attack north during the one hundred hours of combat. In essence, we were retracing our steps. COL Moreno broke up the brigade formation after the maintenance stop and told all the battalions to move at their own pace. We maintained a speed of approximately fifteen MPH. This was mainly to accommodate the M113 APCs and wheel vehicles traveling with the tanks. At about 1530 hours, we arrived in the vicinity of PL New Jersey. Four tanks dropped out during

the movement--two of them for broken track and two for major engine component failures.

At the lager site for the night, we pulled into an administrative formation. We lined the vehicles up motor pool style. The soldiers did their after operations maintenance and the Company Commanders concentrated on recovering any vehicles left behind. The Maintenance Plt performed some more miracles. All in all, our stay at this position was relaxed. The soldiers built cooking fires and there was a great deal of camaraderie, humor, and relief. We were on the way home, and everyone knew it.

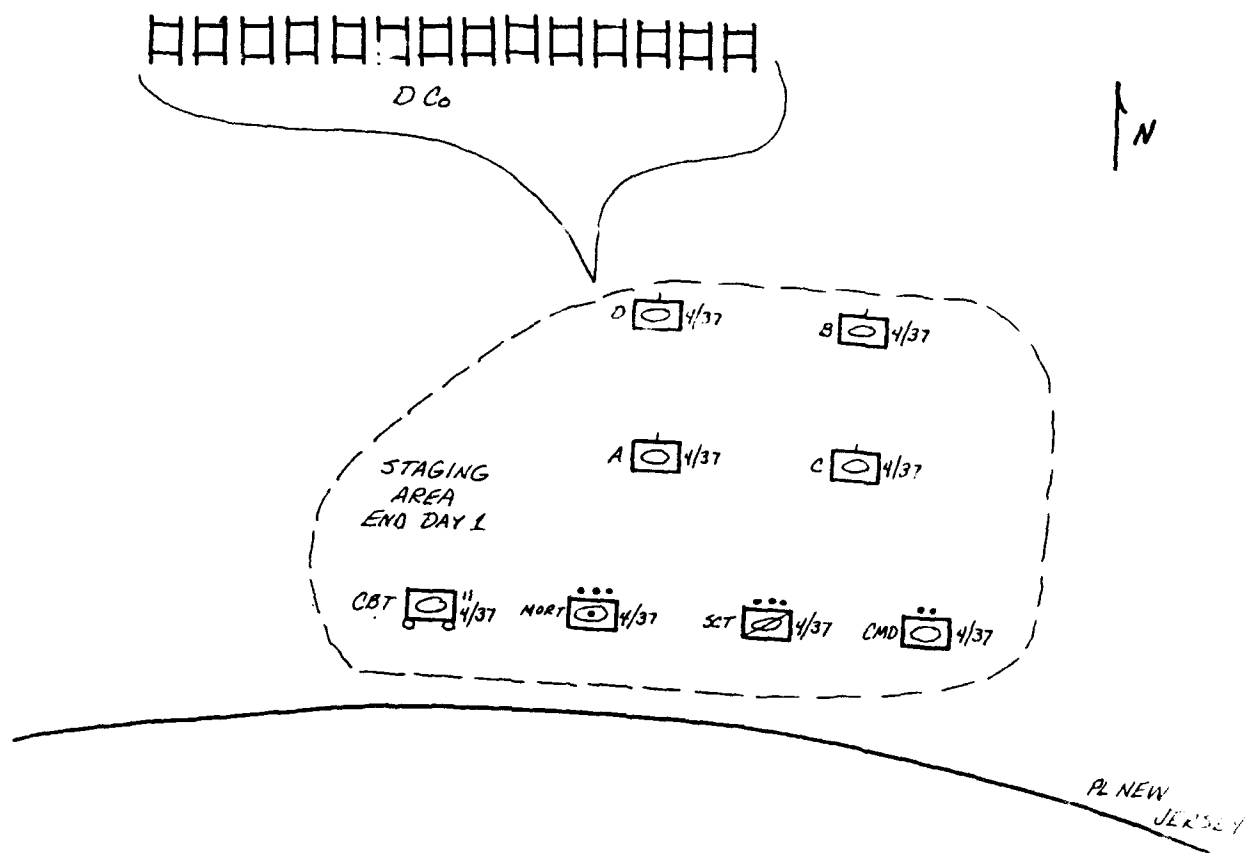


Diagram #65. PL New Jersey Staging Area.

COL Moreno visited us within thirty minutes of our arrival. I gave him our status report and we went over the next phase of the move.

At 1630 hours, I was summoned to the brigade TOC. MAJ Cook was leading me there with his GPS. Suddenly, he realized he had punched in the wrong data. I was almost late getting to the brigade as I retraced my steps.

At brigade, the most significant item to come out of the meeting was the offer of HET support from 201st Fwd Spt Bn. Immediately after the meeting, I went straight to LTC Hand's location and informed him I needed three HETs. I returned to the battalion and informed CSM Stockton to get the three deadlined tanks to the 201st Fwd Spt Bn location. I asked CSM Stockton to stay with the tanks all the way back to RAA Huebner. I did not want another B22 incident. I had discovered any vehicle without adult leadership was subject to being lost or side-tracked en route. CSM Stockton wanted to stay with the battalion, but like the true professional he was, he executed the mission. The next thing we knew, brigade made him responsible for all the HETs and all the brigade's deadlined vehicles in the convoy. He was not happy--neither was I.

I sent MAJ Cook to do a reconnaissance of our SP for the next day. When I returned, he had located the entrance to Route Orange and I was satisfied we would have no difficulties. I spent part of the night sitting around an open fire with my tank crew telling jokes and having a good time. It seemed like the

first time I had relaxed since 8 November 1990. Coffee and hot chocolate were the order of the night.

We moved out at 0600 hours the next morning, 16 April 1991. MAJ Cook's reconnaissance was accurate. However, just before we moved out, I realized we had to cross MSR Blue to get to Route Orange. I also knew LTC Hand, with all the BSA wheels, would be traveling on MSR Blue the same morning. I called him and explained. We had a thirty minute head start on his movement, but he said he would delay for me to cross if we needed more time. I thanked him and we pressed on.

Route Orange was one of several cleared routes running all the way to the gaps in the "Berm." The route took us single file all the way back through our initial breach lanes and through the "Berm." The move was slow as we traversed a plowed, soft, sandy lane going due south. Along the route, we saw the old Iraqi positions we had assaulted on the first day of the war and the initial trench line.



Tanks moving in single file along Route Orange. Notice the soft sand and the dust signatures of the tanks. The pile of sand running perpendicular to the route is a buried Iraqi trench line, or fighting position.



The initial Iraqi trench line the battalion attacked on G-day. The entire trench was buried and many Iraqis were buried alive.

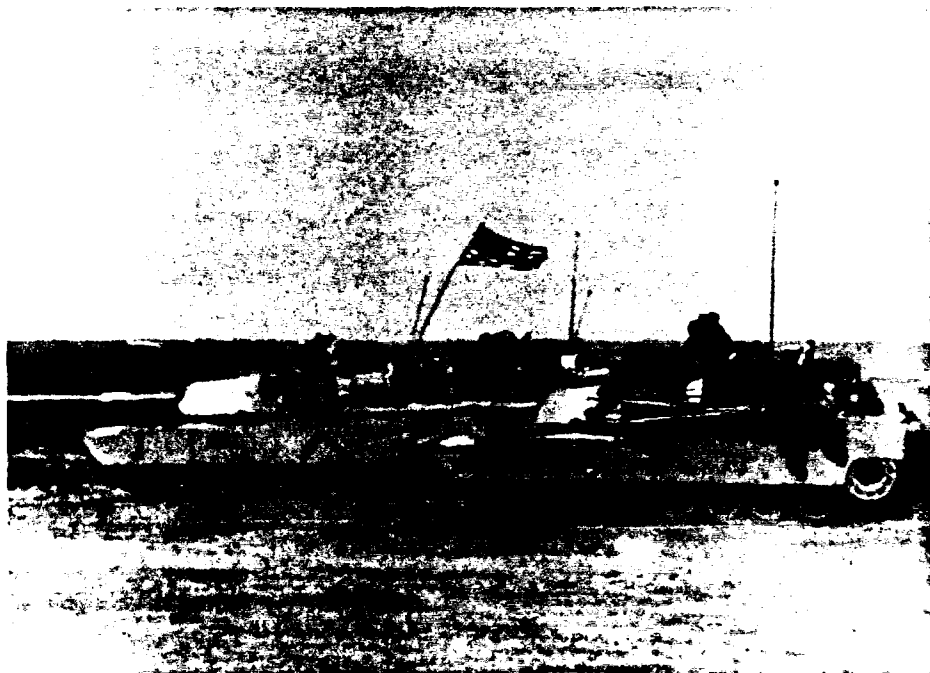
After we passed the trench line, COL Moreno notified me the berm gap on Route Orange was closed. He told me to move to Route Blue ASAP. I was the second tank in the column. I had an American flag on my tank. My loader, CPL Perkins, received it from his mother. As we drove through the gap in the berm, MG Rhame was standing at the berm with a wave. I returned it with a salute. We had a maintenance stop on the other side of the berm.

We lined up motor pool style and took a head count. As soon as we accounted for everyone, I notified brigade we were

out of Iraq, with the exception of CSM Stockton and the brigade HET convoy. We moved out after an hour of maintenance checks.

The next seventy kilometers was a beautiful move. We stayed in a box formation and everyone went on line and we picked up the pace. The terrain was not as soft and the sand and dust were reduced. We traveled at about twenty-five MPH and were ahead of the rest of the brigade. We were a glorious sight to behold as we cut across the desert. We came across more Bedouins and Saudi Arabians with their sheep and camel herds. Without breaking stride, we skillfully maneuvered around them and continued the pace. The only tanks dropping out of the formation were the ones with bad track. One tank crew broke its track three times in the same move. We patched him up to get him home.

This was a special day for me. After being in tanks for almost twenty years, I knew I was making the last tank ride of my career. We considered the move out of Iraq the last day of the war for the battalion. My last tank ride was on that day. I concealed my emotions as I looked at the battalion around me heading home. I was very proud to have been a part of the entire conflict and the results.



LTC Marlin's tank in the middle of the battalion formation going south. This photo later appeared in the Army Times. It was taken by LT Wiser of C Co who was on the left flank. The American flag belonged to CPL Perkins, the loader. This was LTC Marlin's last tank ride.



The battalion heading south to the Tapline Road.



The battalion approaches one of many herds of sheep and camels.

About three kilometers north of the Tapline Road, the battalion halted for the night. The time was about 1300 hours. We had made remarkable time. The next battalion would not catch up to us until about 1500 to 1600 hours. We moved into a motor pool formation and began pulling after operation maintenance. Six tanks broke track during the move. We had accountability and began shuttling the remaining track blocks to these tanks. Our recovery of these tanks was not complete until 2300 hours. MAJ Garrity put himself in charge of the recovery operation and stayed with it until completion. CPT Roles assisted him with my HMMWV and driver. I was ticked at CPT Roles later for keeping

my vehicle out for so long a time period. In my mind, he was serving as an unnecessary retransmission site.

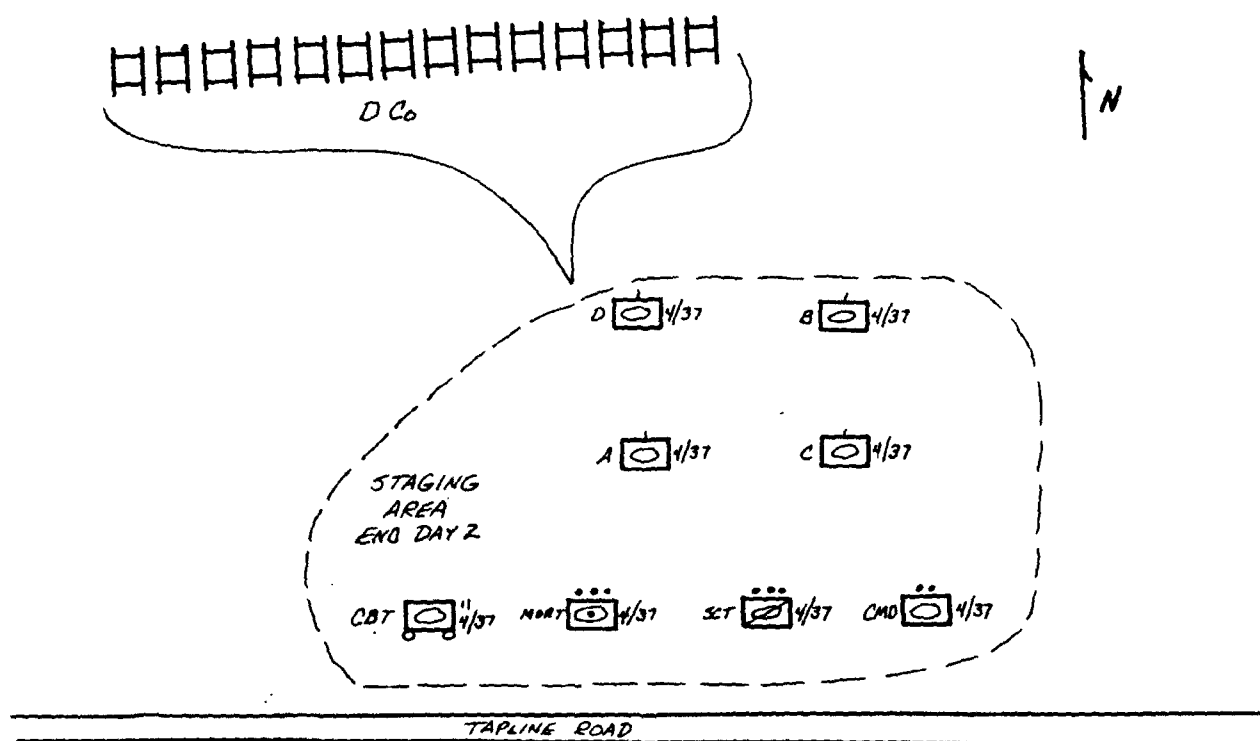


Diagram #66. Tapline Road Staging Area.

I was summoned to brigade at 1500 hours. COL Moreno briefed all the Battalion Commanders on his plan to cross the Tapline Road. In order to protect the underground pipeline on the south side of the Tapline road, the engineers constructed dirt bridges to protect it from tracked vehicles. There were four bridges in all. COL Moreno's concept was to line up the entire brigade, one battalion behind the other, and, at the flip of a switch, get everyone across in record time. The MPs blocked the road at the east and west ends during the crossing.

I returned to the battalion and briefed the plan. We lined up behind TF 2-16 and TF 3-37 lined up behind us. The Scout Plt moved out in front of us to serve as guides for the tail end of TF 2-16's vehicles. Each tank company lined up behind one Scout Plt BFV, and the Mortar Plt and combat trains followed the tank companies.

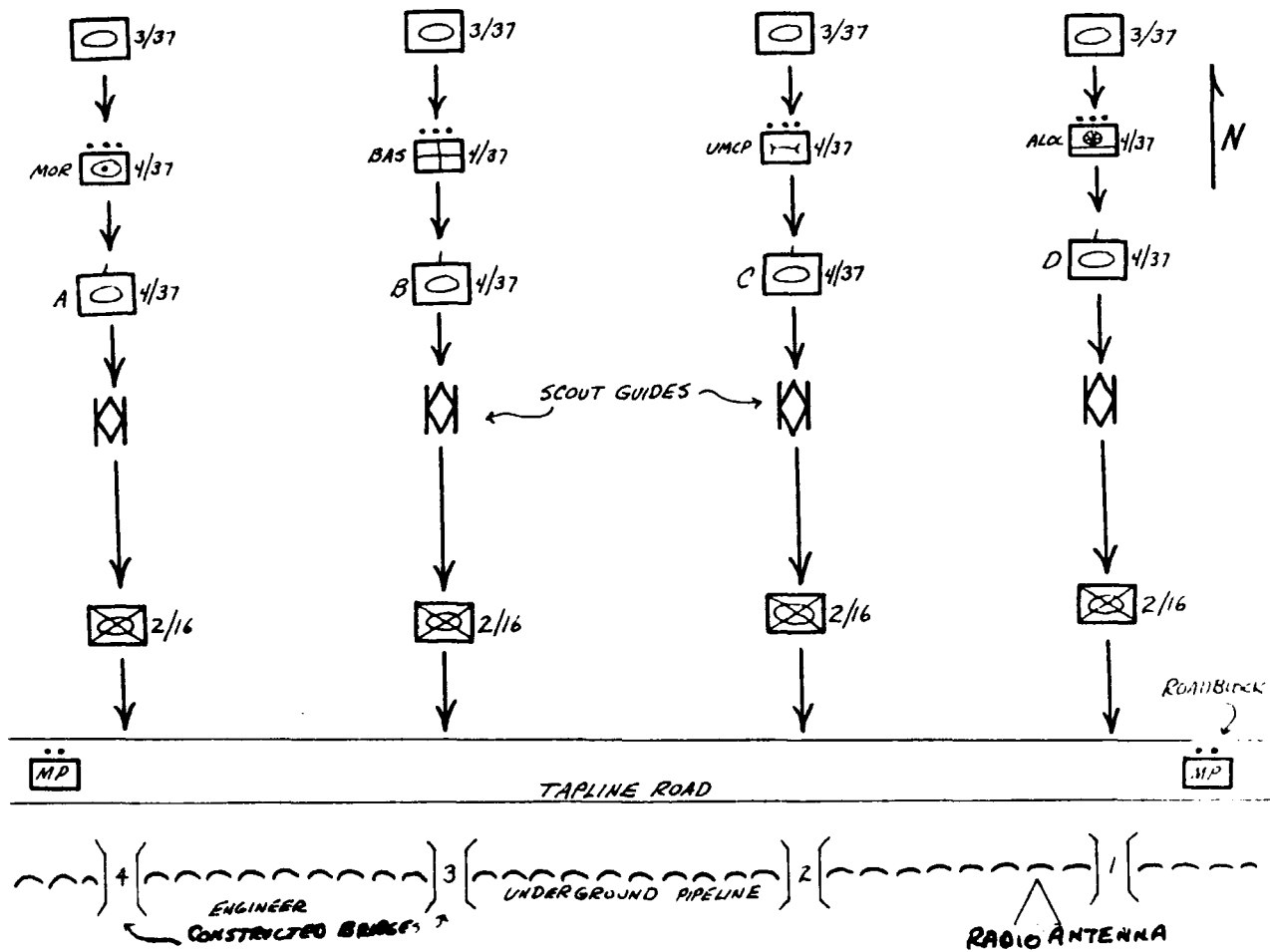


Diagram #67. Crossing the Tapline Road.

The night was peaceful and quiet. About midnight, SFC Ballinger monitored a call between LT Corbo and CPT Feeser in RAA Huebner. He was not aware LT Corbo was in RAA Huebner and relayed the message to CPT Martin. As a result, LT MacMullen, the acting B Co XO, crossed the Tapline Road prematurely next morning and caused a lot of grief. Brigade was upset over the incident and wanted to punish SFC Ballinger. I disagreed. An unintentional mistake was made, no harm was done, the persons responsible were counseled, and after a period of time, the issue died.

Also about midnight, brigade called wanting to know the status of "my" HET convoy. I informed them CSM Stockton was out of radio range and I had no knowledge of his location. I told them when and if he arrived I would report his status. I continued for the rest of the night making radio checks on the administrative and logistics net attempting to reach him. He finally arrived around 0200 hours.

CSM Stockton explained his efforts to me. The HETs did not show up as scheduled, or promised--no surprise to us. He eventually made it happen himself and commandeered two HETs traveling in our direction. Two battalions sent more vehicles to the load site without making any additional requests for HET support. He was upset because he felt he was assigned a mission with little or no support from our support battalion or higher headquarters.

We began our move to the line up point at 0400 hours in the morning. The Scout Plt preceded us. We maneuvered north and

then south in order to bring the entire battalion into a straight line heading for the bridges. The darkness caused us to go very slowly and deliberately to the link-up with the Scout Plt. There was a little confusion, but not much.

At 0600 hours, with daylight just breaking, the signal was given to move across the Tapline Road. We moved fast. The entire battalion crossed in under ten minutes. On the other side of the Tapline Road, we moved into our formation and moved toward RAA Huebner.



Tanks hitting the main, graded road leading to RAA Huebner. Notice the dust and haze from the track vehicles' movement.

We passed a group of small trees during the movement to RAA Huebner. Someone on the radio commented about them being the "Saudi Arabian National Forest" and everyone laughed. They were the first trees we had seen in four months.

I rode in my HMMWV into RAA Huebner. After a brief delay for traffic, the battalion pulled into the designated motor pool area.



Tanks moving to RAA Huebner after crossing the Tapline Road. Trees/shrubs on the right side of the photo are the "Saudi Arabian National Forest."

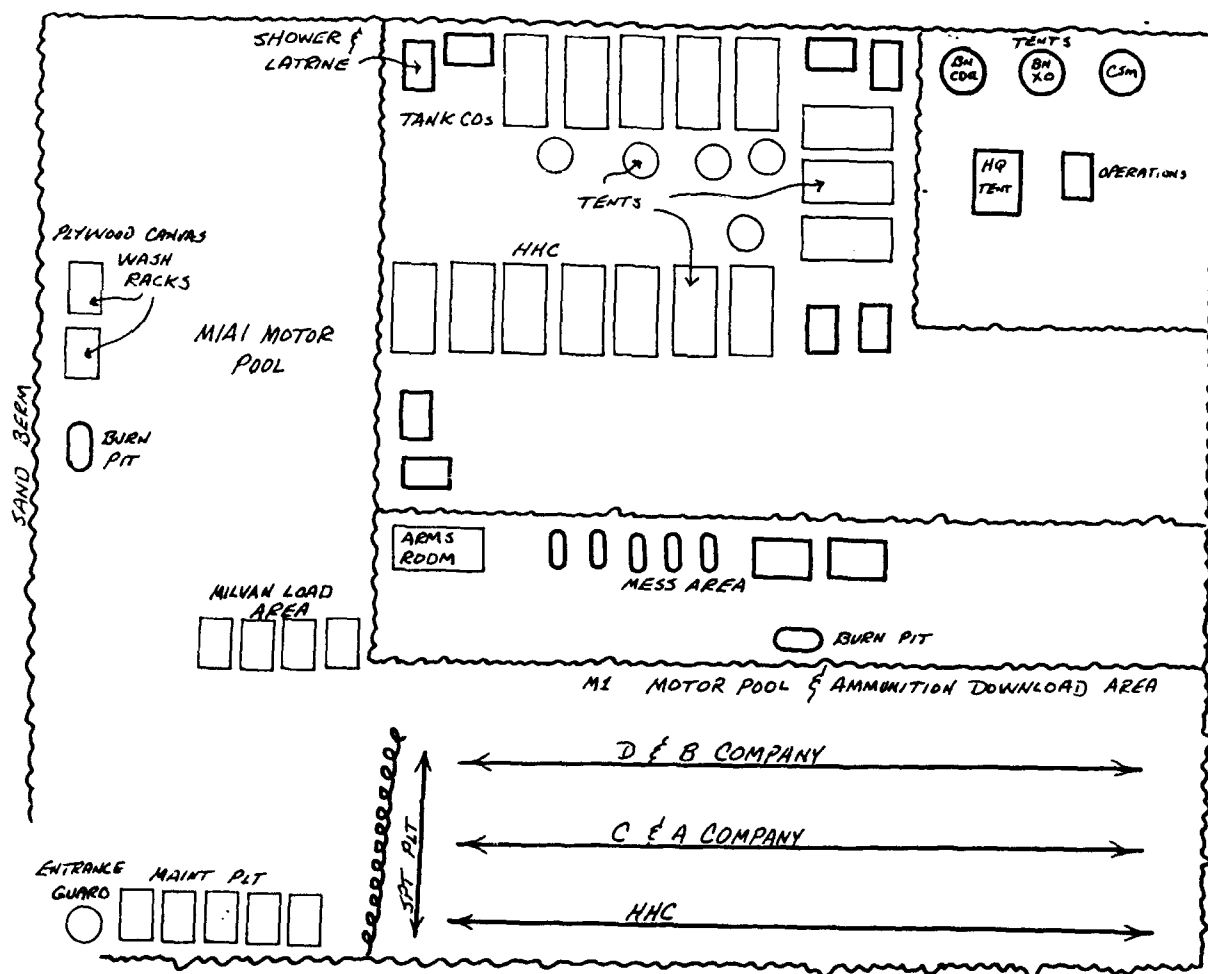
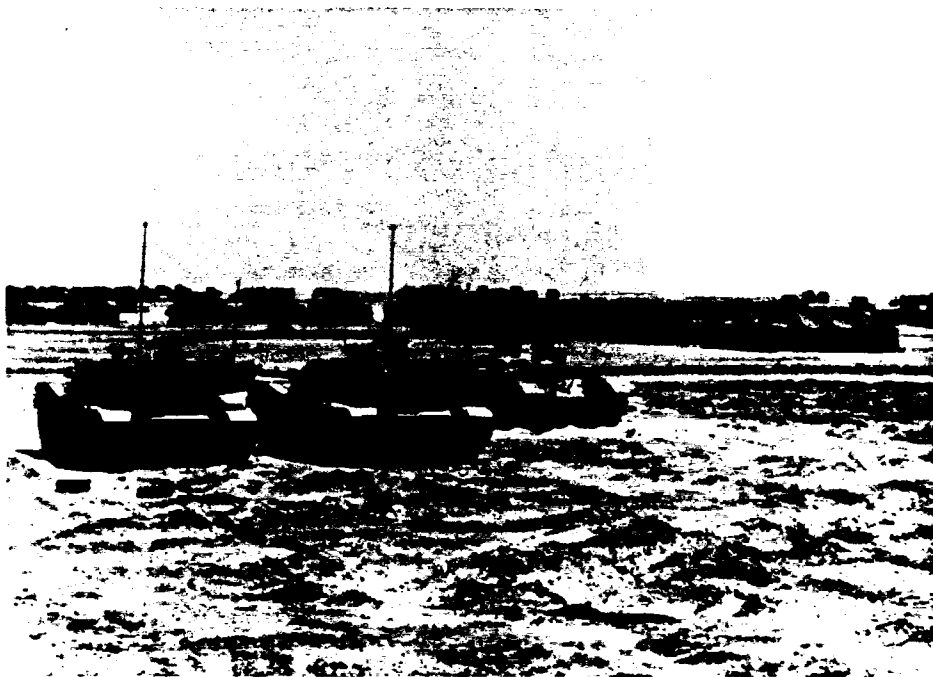


Diagram #68. Layout of RAA Huebner.



Part of the tent and billeting area in RAA Huebner. Each corner of the tent area had a latrine, shower, and a water trailer.



Tent area in RAA Huebner. Tanks eventually moved out of the designated motor pool to an area adjacent to the tents. T72 adjacent to the two M1 tanks was the one tank brigade tasked us to man and bring home for the museum.



CSM Stockton watching the arrival of the battalion into the motor pool. In the background are the three forty foot SeaLand vans assigned to the battalion.

Life in Rear Assembly Area Huebner

RAA Huebner was advertised as the closest thing to civilization we had seen in three to four months. In the end, we discovered it to be a dust bowl. We had very few conveniences in RAA Huebner that we did not have anywhere else in the desert. The troops were allowed to go to Danger Town, commonly referred to as the "Desert Mall." Danger Town had a PX, pizza sales, Wolf Burgers, video games, telephones, and a movie theater. We furnished three soldiers to assist in its operation.

Danger Town was for the use of the entire division. It was very crowded and congested with long lines. We used the two captured buses as well as our own trucks to transport troops back and forth. The "Heartbeat of America" (the Chevy Malibu) bought the farm in the middle of the desert when its oil pan fell out.



Soldiers going through the entrance of Danger Town. All weapons were cleared by an entrance guard prior to entering the area. Soldiers were allowed to wear soft caps in RAA Huebner.



Danger Town in RAA Huebner. Shown in the photo are the PX, movie theater, Wolf Burger bar, game room, and pizza place.

The best thing in RAA Huebner was the showers. Water was delivered by the 201st Fwd Spt Bn. After a few days, things went back to normal and we had to get it ourselves.

The terrain around RAA Huebner was barren. This caused sand and dust storms lasting for days. Some days, visibility was less than a hundred meters. By 1000 hours each day, the temperatures skyrocketed to over ninety-five degrees. The combination of sweating in a very humid environment in the middle of a sand storm was unbearable. We eventually reached the point of sitting them out. We put our face scarves on to breathe through and found a shaded place to sit until about 1630

hours. The wind always seemed to die down at the end of the day and in the evening. Soldiers starting doing heavy labor in the evening and morning, and nothing but enduring in the middle of the day.

One night, a brisk sand storm hit. I was in my tent and I woke up in the dark. I turned on my flashlight. There was so much sand blowing around the inside of the tent the beam of light could not penetrate to the ceiling of the tent. The sand was blowing in from under the tent. I pulled a poncho liner over my head to breathe through and went back to sleep. The next morning, I had about a half inch of fine silt over me and everything I owned inside the tent. I remember thinking I was better off sleeping on top of the tank than in the tent. My opinion was shared by all the soldiers in the battalion the next morning.

In addition to the heat and the sand, about every three days the sky would get black from the burning oil wells. No one liked the thought of breathing the air, but there was an advantage: it blocked out the sun and made it cooler.



Photo of the sky and sun in the middle of the day from RAA Huebner.

Preparing to Redeploy

Everything we did in RAA Huebner was oriented to redeployment and going home. Vehicles were cleaned and repaired. Vehicles were repacked and reorganized as well as the soldiers' personal equipment. We were given several taskings to support the brigade and the division. MAJ Cook was tasked to become the OIC of the division wash rack at Ad Dammam. MAJ Garrity was still tasked and working on the division awards board.

The battalion was tasked to take possession of a captured T72 tank and deliver it to the museum at Ft. Riley. We picked

up the tank from the division G2. When we were asked what we did with the ammunition on board, MAJ Garrity pulled their chain by telling them we shot it. Some people did not think this was funny--we did.

Statement by MAJ Cook, the Battalion S3, describing his tasking to be the OIC of the division wash rack on 19 April 1991:

On the second day in RAA Huebner, I was selected to supervise the division's wash rack in Dhahran. I left RAA Huebner around 19 April with 3 HMMWVs, four five-ton trucks, and forty-six personnel from our battalion TF 3-37, TF 2-16, and 201st Fwd Spt Bn.

A recommendation to anyone in the future . . . Be aware of the gender of your troops prior to taking on a mission. After several months without females, I forgot they existed in the support battalions. Unfortunately, I was not aware the 201st Fwd Spt Bn had provided females for this detail, and CPT McClelland of the 201st Fwd Spt Bn did not make me aware of this fact. We were driving for two hours and it was apparent we needed to empty bladders from the bouncing along Tapline Road. The trucks emptied fast, with all the males unzipping and relieving themselves --then someone mentioned females. I looked around to find three female medics trying to find some privacy behind the front wheel well of a truck. I felt embarrassed for them and I was aggravated at CPT McClelland for not letting me know they were along.

We arrived at Khobar Towers around 1700 hours in the afternoon and attached ourselves to the DREAR operations under the supervision of LTC Westholm.

We said goodbye to CPT Feeser and CPT Roles. They would return early. I could not say enough good things about both of these officers. As volunteers, they stepped into difficult situations and never broke stride in tackling some of our serious problems and challenges.

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Unfortunately, I also counseled several officers with regard to their poor performance. One of these, a captain, was on a voluntary indefinite status and I did not sign his paperwork recommending an extension. I truly felt with the upcoming force reduction, it was best for him and for the Army.

One lieutenant, a Platoon Leader, was involved in a serious breach of ethics. After serving as a prior enlisted soldier, four years at West Point, and two years with his present platoon, he was turned in to his Company Commander for selling cigarettes to his soldiers for a profit. He was a non-smoker. I finally counseled this officer and presented him with an OER reflecting his ethical deficiency. I urged him to seek other means of employment upon our return to the U.S.

We had brigade and battalion command and staff meetings daily. We constantly reviewed the status of all the issues required to redeploy to port. No detail was left out in our planning.



The T72 tank assigned to the battalion. A Co was given the responsibility to man and crew this vehicle. The tank still had ammunition on board.

By the time we arrived at RAA Huebner, the MILVANS had been located and delivered to the area. They had to be delivered because we had no internal transportation means of pulling these trailers. We unloaded all of them and it was like Christmas. The soldiers, like myself, received their two duffel bags of personal effects not seen since TAA Roosevelt. Unloading all the equipment we had brought from Ft. Riley to make life more bearable was unpacked. We came to the conclusion we would have been better off coming to the war with our rucksacks rather than all the effort expended at hand carrying duffel bags and packing

MILVANS. CW3 LeMay was happy to get back into his spare part MILVANS.

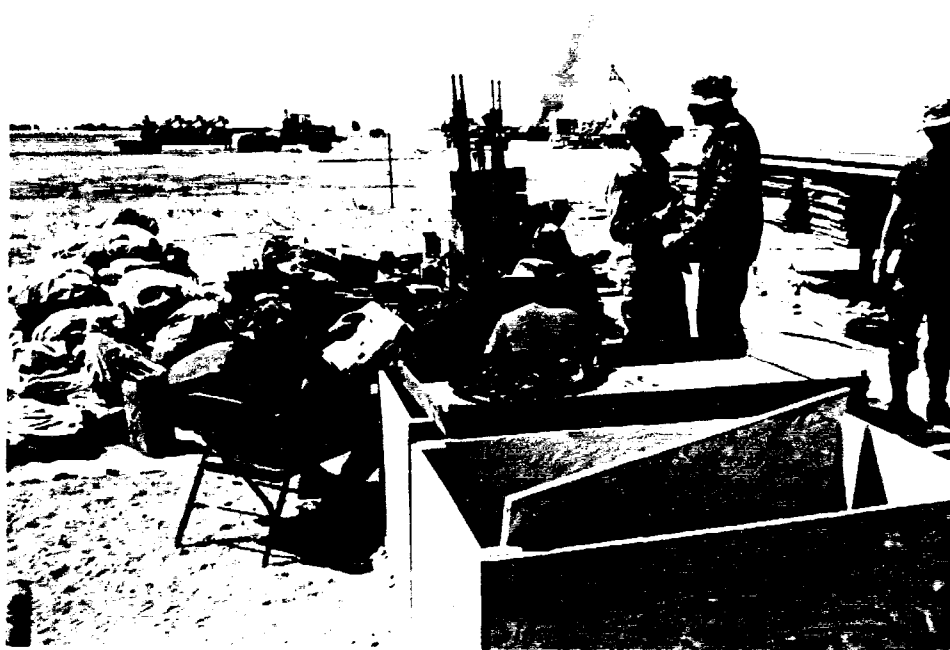
We began to execute a one hundred percent property inventory and to repack the MILVANS for the trip home. One of the catches that all our property had to be inspected by customs before the MILVANS could be sealed. One of the big advantages of the thirteen M109 vans was having them inspected and sealed just like the MILVANS. Several of the inspectors were our own soldiers tasked and trained as customs inspectors. We kept hearing nightmares about the canvas tents. In the end, we brought all of our canvas tents home. The repacking of the MILVANS was a major undertaking and took a lot of manual labor under a hot sun.

Several of the locks were replaced without our permission in the DISCOM area and items were missing. We initiated and finalized all reports of survey. We had over thirty reports of survey for the entire war period. They ranged from totally destroyed HEMMTs to a damaged M16 rifle and TA 50. I made a judgement on each one based on the circumstances.

We also had three SeaLand vans to pack. CPT Feeser had executed the same style of supply procedures in RAA Huebner before we arrived. He scrounged. His end result was a stockpile of tires and repair parts. We continued this process in RAA Huebner. We sent out scrounging missions and continued to find bulk supplies and repair parts.

The interesting thing was that the supply units were getting ready to head home and did not want to have to pack all

their repair parts and supplies and were now giving them away gladly. We filled the vans with parts for use at home. CW3 LeMay found seven heat shields for tanks towing tanks. The real shame was the availability of parts and supplies now after the war was over. None of this helped my perception of the logistic distribution system in theater.



CPT Torrence reads a newspaper while supervising the loading of the MILVANS. Wooden boxes in the foreground were constructed by the troops from sheets of plywood. Note the mine rollers on the ten ton truck in the background. After the war, TF 2-16 returned our mine rollers and the ten-ton flatbed trucks to us. The pile of bags to the left of CPT Torrence are used protective suits ready for packing.



CPT Wock and LT Lee supervising MILVAN loading. The tent was set up for a shade area.



Soldiers loading the MILVANs. Notice the large unit numbers on the sides of the MILVANs. This was one of the smartest things we did; otherwise, we would still be looking for these containers in port.

The Support Plt began the turn-in of all ammunition. We down-loaded all the main gun and small arms and went through the process of a detailed turn-in complete with correct paperwork. The turn-in took about eight days in all to complete.

Trading Tanks

Discussions continued about the turn-in of our M1 tanks for M1A1s. In the end, the decision was made to turn-in the M1 tanks and receive M1A1s while in RAA Huebner. There were two sets of tanks available. Both M1A1 sets of tanks would be

transferred to us from battalions in theater. One set of tanks did not have the armor plate modification to the turret and the other did. The battalion's worth of tanks without the armor plate would have to have it installed in port.

COL Moreno tossed a coin and I won. I had first choice on the two sets of tanks. I chose the 2nd Bn, 70th Ar's tanks because they already had the armor plate modification. This was one less thing the soldiers would have to worry about in port.

LTC R. Steve Whitcomb coordinated with me directly on the hand-over of his tanks. He and I knew the facts of life regarding the hand-over. He would give and I would receive. There were no options. MAJ Garrity had gone to great lengths to develop a detailed, three-day plan to inspect the new tanks. He briefed me on it several times. It was a good plan; but in my heart, I just did not see it happening. I somehow knew we would not have the time or the ability to pick and choose the tanks we wanted or did not want. LTC Whitcomb would bring me his fifty-eight tanks and I would take all of them. There really were no choices to be made.

LTC Whitcomb was not pleased, to say the least, about the repair parts situation in theater. He and I shared some of our experiences on the logistics and supply side of the house.

Two days before the M1A1 tanks were delivered, I had all the Tank Commanders come together and I briefed them. I explained to them the realities of the exchange. I informed them it was critical to get face to face with the old Tank Commander and get an accurate status on the tank they were to

receive. This was the best we could hope for--honesty between Tank Commanders. I explained their repair parts situation was the same as ours. Pointing out deficiencies on a tank we had to accept was merely postponing the inevitable and wasting valuable time. They accepted what I had to say as true professionals.

The day before LTC Whitcomb brought his tanks the seventy kilometer distance to RAA Huebner from his base camp, COL Moreno informed me I would take only forty-eight of LTC Whitcomb's tanks. I was to pick up nine M1A1 tanks from the 1st Sqdn, 4th Cav, and keep the ADC(M)'s M1A1 tank given to us at Safwan.

I attempted to get a message to LTC Whitcomb through division to inform him to bring only forty-eight tanks. I failed. He showed up with all fifty-eight tanks, and I felt bad about ten of the crews making the trip for nothing. LTC Whitcomb understood. He gave me his best forty-eight tanks. Several of the ones not selected had to be towed back to his base camp.

Once we accepted the M1A1 tanks, we transferred all the equipment from our old tanks to our new tanks. Two days later, we drove the old tanks to a turn-in point south of KKMC. The distance was another seventy kilometer marathon. We dragged about six tanks to the turn-in point. The turn-in was smooth and we transported all the soldiers home in trucks.

Statement by LT Corbo, B Co XO, describing the turn-in of tanks on 24 April 1991:

During the next few days, the company worked to ensure all the old vehicles were operational for the last road march--to the turn-in site. I, along with

the supply sergeant, prepared the necessary paperwork and made sure all the components were accounted for.

The day of the turn-in, we managed to roll all of our tanks out of the motor pool. During the road march, B13 broke track. It took about an hour to find the necessary tools and parts, and another thirty minutes to repair the track. The rest of the company moved on as SSG Plumb and SPC Byron K. Hughes labored over their wounded tank. This caused a few problems for me. I had to ensure the company made it to KKMC and make sure B13 did not get lost.

As we got closer to KKMC, B11 lost an engine. It either ran out of fuel or had mechanical failure. I had another tank take B11 under tow and we continued. At about 1200 hours, the company finally closed on the turn-in site. I met with the yard foreman and had the crews start laying out the components.

When the inventory was complete, we were given permission to move the tanks into the yard. This is when the fun really began. It was almost as if the vehicles knew we were leaving them behind. Two tanks would not start. We quickly hooked them up to operational tanks and towed them into the yard. As our last tank, B66, started forward, it broke track. Quick action by the company got the track back on in sixteen minutes and they limped the tank into the turn-in yard.

There were many mixed emotions this day. We were glad to receive new tanks, but it was hard to give up the vehicles that served us so well during combat. When I first arrived at Ft. Riley in 1989, I never dreamed I would have to fight with the equipment we had in the motor pool. Those lessons I learned during the days' training and deploying will help me to train future soldiers. I will never take for granted that we will receive POMCUS equipment upon arrival to our GDP. I will always think and train with the idea that the next time we fight, it will be a "come as you are" war.

Statement by CPT Torrence, the C Co Commander, describing the turn-in of the M1 tanks on 24 April 1991:

The movement to the turn-in site was the last major move with our battle-weary M1 tanks. During the planning of this mission, the staff somehow forgot to mention we had to cross the Wadi Al Batin one last

time. Because we were towing several vehicles located near the end of the column, we did not realize, until it was too late, the problems we were about to incur. All of the operational tanks had moved across the wadi. We then realized we had to send tanks back to use as brake tanks for the tanks being towed. This would not have been a problem if we had had radios.

All of the radios had been removed and turned in at a different location. CPT Wock ended up as CINC tow and deliberately moved all the broken vehicles down the wadi. The process took about three to four hours. To compound the situation, we had to drive down the only road in the local area. The danger of sixty tons worth of tank out of control caused us to post guards to stop traffic in both directions. Our C2 was further complicated by the inability of radio traffic out of the wadi with the radios we did have operating.

I moved with the forward column to act as a traffic control point and lost communications with CPT Wock. LTC Marlin was frantically trying to establish radio contact, to no avail, with the party at the wadi. In the end, CPT Wock and LT Corbo brought in all the tanks safely.

Statement by CPT Hall, the Battalion S4, describing his actions at getting the M1 tanks turned in on 24 April 1991:

I linked up with the OIC (can't remember the unit) of the unit to signing for our M1s. They were a great group of good ol' boys. I told them the tanks I was going to turn in were going to be missing a couple of items because we were not sure what was going to be on the tank we were supposed to draw.

Again, nobody is going to do something for nothing. After a lengthy conversation, I discovered he needed three hundred 200 series locks. So I told him I would get him the locks, if he would accept all fifty-eight of my tanks without question. He agreed. The battalion ended up with a lot of excess radios and Basic Issue Items (BII)

We began re-stenciling all the M1A1 tanks. New track became available and we put forty sets on the tanks. This was a major undertaking because of the hot weather. All in all, the

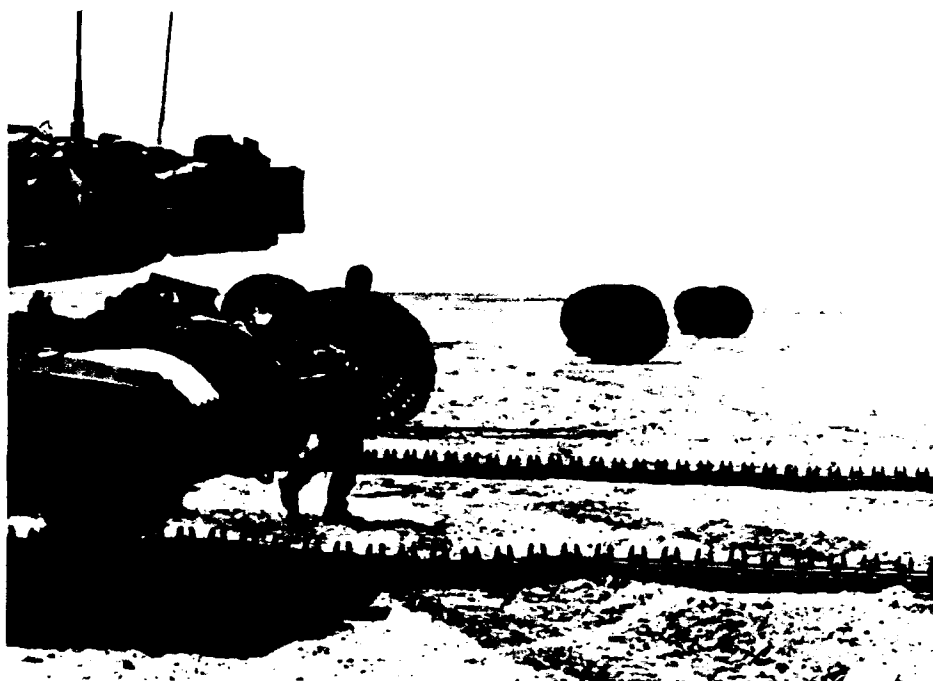
M1A1 tanks we received were in much better condition than our old M1s. The soldiers seemed pleased. We were also proud about being one of only two battalions who fought in every phase of the war with our original equipment.



Soldiers changing track. New track came in sections of eight pads and had to be assembled before being put on the tank. It takes four strong men to lift one eight-pad track section.



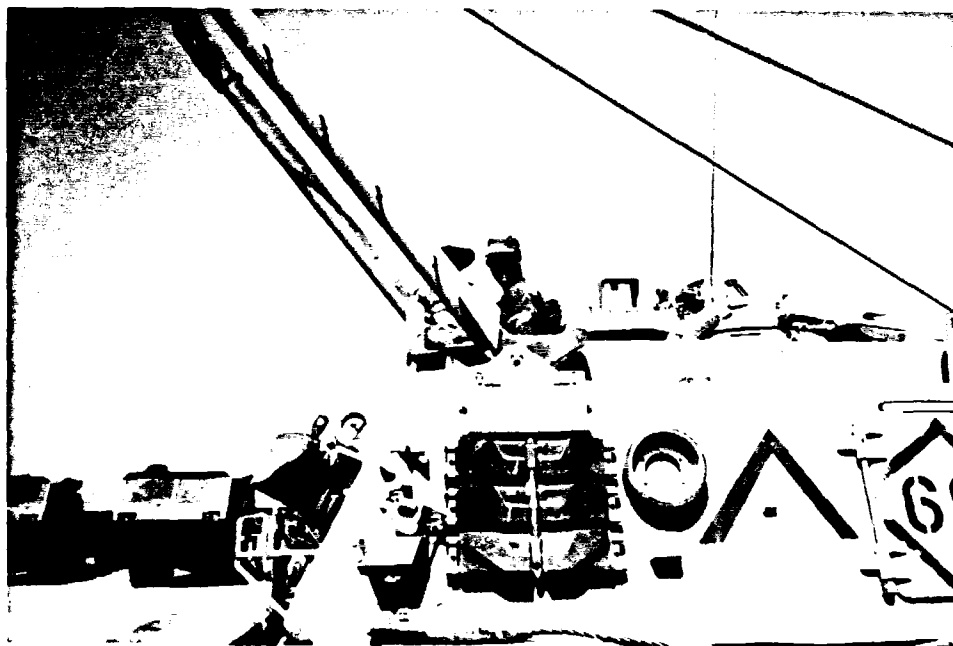
A Co replacing old track with new track in
RAA Huebner.



Replacing tank track in RAA Huebner. Notice the old track being rolled up for turn-in.



An A Co tank driving off an old track and walking on a new track.



An M88 recovery vehicle assisting in hauling away the old track. Track was turned in rolled up. As time ran out, a lot of track was buried in the desert.

Awards Ceremony

MG Rhame arrived to present awards to individuals receiving the BSM for valor at a battalion ceremony. We had eight individuals being presented this award. The battalion was formed into a horseshoe formation. After MG Rhame made the presentations in person, he spoke to the battalion. After his departure, I added my comments about the individuals receiving the awards and made sure the soldiers understood we still had a lot of awards to be presented back at Ft. Riley.



MG Rhame and COL Moreno presenting LTC Marlin with the BSM for valor at a battalion formation in RAA Huebner.



MG Rhame addressing the battalion during the
awards ceremony in RAA Huebner.



LTC Marlin addressing the battalion at the awards ceremony in RAA Huebner.

Another Rehearsal

As we were getting ready to return home, our personnel were broken into about five different groups of soldiers. The advance party consisting of CSM Stockton and CPT Paluso with all the 1SGs would remain at RAA Huebner and execute the final close-out of the area with a handful of soldiers. MAJ Cook was at port with a twelve man detail operating the division wash rack. One group of soldiers took the vehicles to the Tapline Road to be loaded on HETs and would catch a bus to Ad Dammam. Another group of soldiers went in trucks to KKMC and caught helicopters to Ad Dammam. All the wheel vehicle drivers and

their assistant drivers were part of two wheel convoys from RAA Huebner back to Khobar Towers. Finally, one group of soldiers was organized in port as a rear detachment.

My philosophy was simple. If I had trouble understanding where everyone was or trouble following the plan, we rehearsed it. The day before departure, we had a battalion formation and did a personnel "rubber duck" drill with every soldier in the battalion. We set up plywood sheets with the names of the locations spray painted on them. After numerous roll calls, the soldiers were put in their respective groups. OICs were assigned and the group went through the movement pattern they would follow to get home. At each station, they received a brief of the actions occurring at each station.

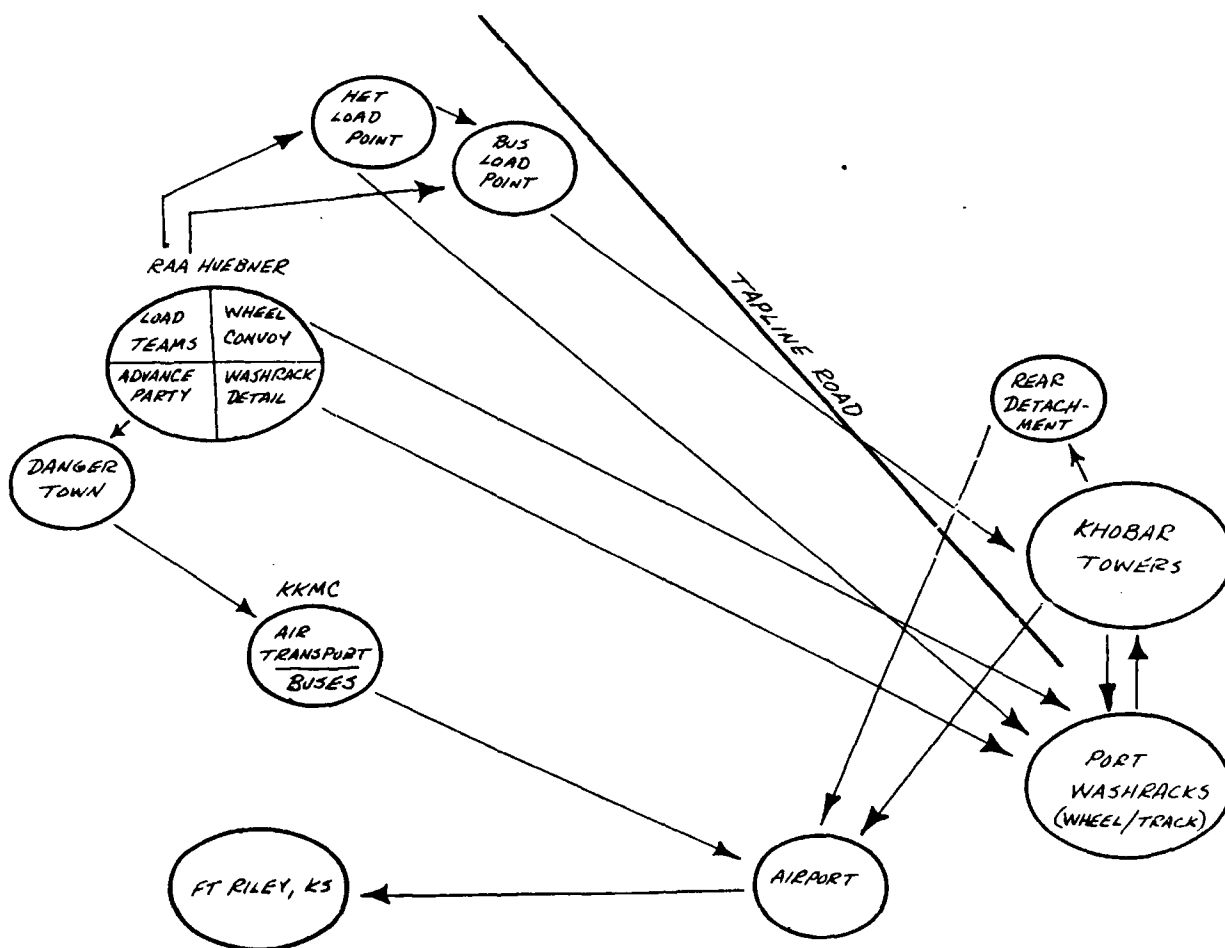


Diagram #69. The Personnel Movement Plan to Port or Ft. Riley.

By the time we finished, every soldier knew exactly when and where he was supposed to be. MAJ Garrity told me later he thought it was a silly idea initially. After his participation, he was glad we did it. I also envisioned another "you're on your own" in port, and was attempting to maintain control right from the start.

Cleaning Up

The last few days in RAA Huebner we cleaned up the area. Our goal was to make the area appear as if we had never been there. We built three large burn pits. Everything was burned. We burned latrines, showers, picnic tables, trash, ammunition, residue, and unserviceable equipment.

The Bedouins kept slipping into the area trying to pick through the trash. We posted guards at all three burn pits to keep them out of the area. Earlier, they had tried to buy our weapons. They always showed up in white Toyota or Datsun pickup trucks. This was their trademark.

The fires burned for days and many times a secondary explosion was triggered. The rear detachment and advance party eventually buried the final ashes.

The berms we had installed as boundary markings were regraded to level the ground. The tents were struck and packed into the MILVANS. Soldiers slept out in the open the last couple of nights. Some leftover items, like tank track, were buried. When we left RAA Huebner, there was not a single shred of evidence we had ever been there.

Several nights before our final departure, the brigade chaplain wrote a prayer. At COL Moreno's insistence, the prayer was presented to all the troops at company level formation. We had a lot to be thankful for--and still a long journey ahead.

CHAPTER 18

REDEPLOYMENT

28 APRIL 1991 - 12 MAY 1991

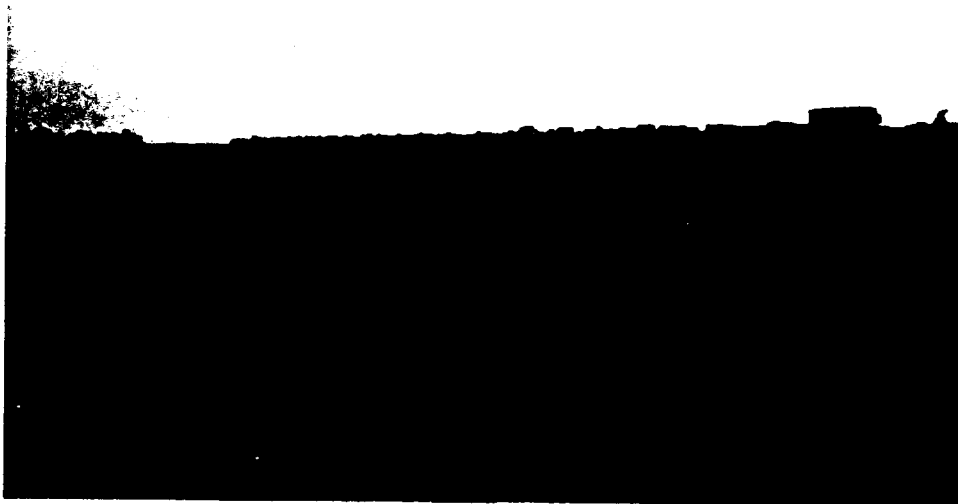
Movement to the Port of Ad Dammam

CPT Paluso and CSM Stockton stayed at RAA Huebner with all the company 1SGs and most of the company supply sergeants. They completed the clearing of RAA Huebner then they gathered the soldiers working at Danger Town and flew to Ft. Riley as our advance party. The reason I chose to send CSM Stockton, the 1SGs, and the supply sergeants was to prepare the billets and orderly rooms for the battalion's arrival at a later date. They arrived at Ft. Riley approximately one week prior to the battalion's arrival.

At 1300 hours on the 28th of April, we moved up to the staging area five kilometers south of the Tapline Road. We moved in two column formations--one for track vehicles and one for wheel vehicles. From this location, we were notified of the HET schedule and availability on the Tapline Road. Everyone was in good spirits. We parked the vehicles in column by company and all the officers and senior non-commissioned officers joined at the head of the columns for some light-hearted discussion. Maintenance of the vehicles was performed and we all sat down for a cup of coffee. We had a peaceful night with minimum security.

**Statement by CPT Torrence, the C Co Commander,
describing the CP set up on 28 April 1991:**

By this time, my command vehicles, C66 and C65, had the CP set-up down to a fine art. The turrets were traversed so the bustle racks faced each other when the tanks were parked side by side. A tarp was then thrown over the bustle racks to form a shelter (shade). A radio speaker was run out of the driver's hatch of C65 so we could monitor the radio net from the ground. A Honda generator produced electricity for the one bulb producing light for the CP. The total set up took five minutes and was used exclusively throughout the movement back to Saudi Arabia.



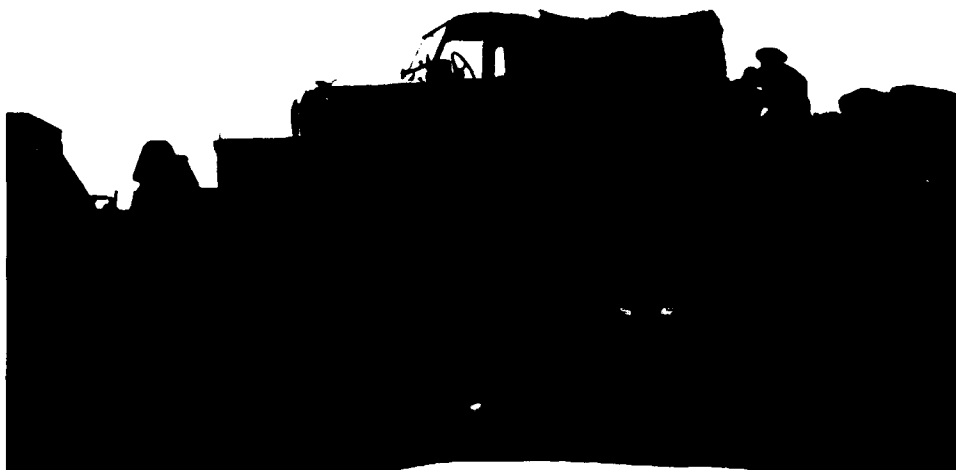
The two columns of wheel vehicles on the right and a glimpse of the track vehicles on the left in the staging area near the Tapline Road.



The tank companies pulling into the staging area and lining up in columns near the Tapline Road. Soldiers are getting out of their tanks to perform maintenance. One of the ten-ton trucks carrying a second trailer and one of the Iraqi "clown cars" we captured.



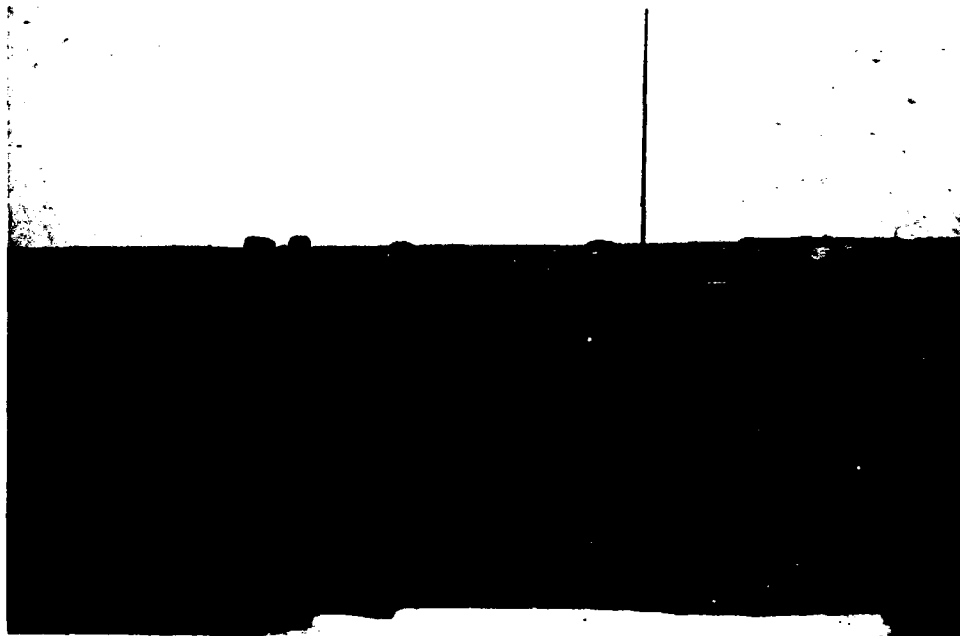
SFC Freeman with one of the ten-ton trucks normally used to carry the mine rollers now hauling a second trailer on top. Replacement tires were not available for this unique tank battalion truck, so the soldiers improvised by using all the good tires on one trailer and putting the other trailer on top.



One of the Iraqi "clown cars" in the back of a cargo HEMMT at the staging area near the Tapline Road. We received permission to take all the captured Iraqi vehicles to port so we would have transportation after we turned our vehicles in for shipping.



The back of LT Powers' hat at the staging area near the Tapline Road. He is looking at the HET loading site. The back of his hat reads "Thumper."

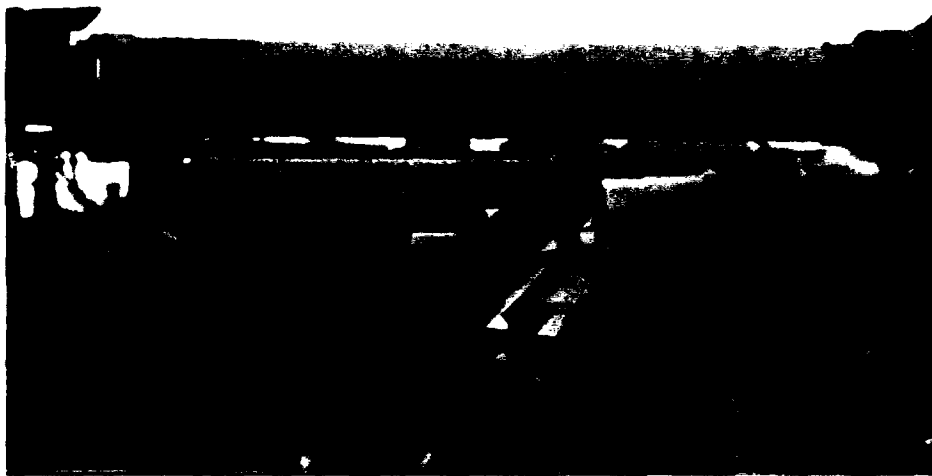


LT Ward, SGT Grodman, 1SG Thiede, LT Powers,
CPT Hall, and CPT Beals at the staging near
the Tapline Road.



SGT Grodman, CPT Torrence, LT Powers, LT Ward, CPT Hall, CPT Loche, MAJ Garrity, and CPT Wock at the staging area near the Tapline Road. The HET loading point can be seen in the background.

On 28 April, we moved up to the Tapline Road and began loading the HETs for the movement to port and the Khobar Towers. We had a mixture of civilian national drivers and American military drivers on the first load. The second load was thirty-six HETs from an Egyptian transportation company. I was very impressed by their performance. These guys really knew how to load vehicles and were well led and organized. Within a couple of hours, the entire battalion was on its way back to port.



A D Co tank waiting to be loaded on an HET.
The tank's name was modified to reflect our
present status--"Destination Unknown!"
After months of uncertainty, we finally had
something close to a schedule.



LTC Marlin at the HET loading site.

The trip back down the Tapline Road to port was a relief. Everyone was happy to be heading back. Few of us had any real appreciation of the hard work still ahead of us. We heard horror stories about cleaning the vehicles to pass the customs inspectors.

The Tapline Road situation had not changed at all. There was no such thing as convoy control of our wheel convoys. All the wheel vehicles in the convoys belonged to us and we had our people in charge. They arrived intact.

As we drove down the road, the usual situations occurred with the HETs. The civilian drivers stopped whenever they

wanted to--either to pray, take a break, visit home, or do maintenance. The military drivers broke down and caught up whenever they could.

I stopped to assist a military HET carrying a 3rd Bn, 37th Ar, tank (the two task forces in the brigade had converted back to pure battalions). They had a flat tire. The tank had to drive off the HET to replace the tire and they did not have the keys. Nothing new here. I had another HET with one of our tanks stop to assist them. We eventually had them underway again two hours later. Our hour later, I repeated the process with the same crew for the same reason. Moving our vehicles by unreliable HETs to port was an eternal struggle.

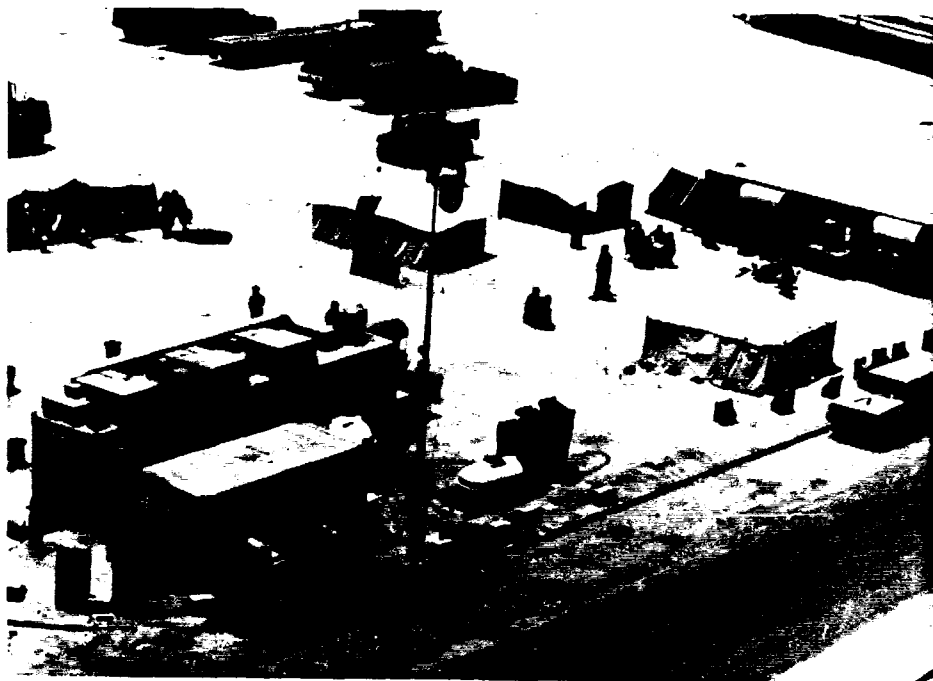
All the key leaders attempted to maintain radio contact and we designated trail vehicles to ensure that we did not lose control or accountability of any of our vehicles on HETs. We had several key leaders riding trail and they were told to be the last vehicle in port for the battalion at all costs. CPT Beals was one of the trail vehicles. After getting the HET moving again, I established radio contact with him. He was with another broken down vehicle, and they were also getting underway, again. I told him I would wait at a specific gas station for him to pick me up en route. We would be the last two vehicles arriving together. He joined me at 0300 hours--two hours later.

After comparing notes, I told him to continue riding trail and I was going to push on ahead. I drove straight through the rest of the night and arrived in port at about 0600 hours. At

port, a dirt motor pool area was designated for our vehicles after they were unloaded from the HETs. I spent the rest of the morning ground-guiding vehicles into the motor pool area near the division wash rack. After I was satisfied that all of our vehicles and personnel were accounted for, I went to the Khobar Towers and moved into the billets.

Life in Khobar Towers

The Khobar Towers was real civilization. As much as I hated the Towers on our first visit months ago, the place was a real pleasure palace. Walls and cots, two hot meals a day, running water, snack bars, telephones, PXs, laundry services, movie theaters, car dealers, and souvenir shops saturated the area. There were even camels for soldiers to have a photo taken riding one. The place was a real circus.



One of several PX annexes in Khobar Towers. Photo was taken from our billet. Photo includes cleaners, burger bar, souvenir shop, and a drink and ice cream shop.

Soldiers wanted to bring souvenirs home. Soldiers wanted to get their combat patch sewn on their right sleeve. Soldiers wanted to spend money. Soldiers learned to appreciate the small things in life more than they ever realized. I did not mind because I felt they had earned the privileges offered at the Towers. At the same time, we had a real challenge ahead of us.

The Track Vehicle Wash Rack and Customs

MAJ Cook linked up with us in the Khobar Towers. He and his twelve man detail were living in a building designated for the wash rack crew. He said he would move everyone back with us

as soon as the detail was over. He briefed MAJ Garrity and me on the wash rack operation. I told MAJ Garrity I would be the OIC of the track wash rack, and he would honcho the wheel wash rack. Ideally, we would have all the tracks finished before we started on the wheels. If not, this plan would give command emphasis and supervision to both locations. His mission was to do a reconnaissance of the wheel wash rack and get the battalion personnel organized to process the wheel fleet. I would do likewise with the track vehicle wash rack.

Statement by MAJ Cook, the Battalion S3, describing his duties as the officer in charge of the division wash rack in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, on 21 April 1991:

Our operation at the wash rack began on the 19th of April when we assumed control from the 1st Cav Div. The operation was reset to accommodate our needs and the first elements began arriving on the 21st of April. The wash rack operated twenty-four hours a day with two shifts of twelve hours. MAJ Joseph V. Muscarella, from 1st Engr Bn, ran the day shift, and I ran the night shift. We operated approximately one hundred wash points along three lines, dividing the majority of the points to tracks (seventy) and the remainder to the wheel fleet.

A download point was established to unload equipment from the transports, and an inspection point and upload area designated to transport the vehicles from the wash rack to the port holding area. We were able to wash the majority of the division's wheel fleet and all the tracks and were completed on 10 May. We then returned to the control of our units to be manifested for the trip home.

The track vehicle wash rack had three lanes to wash tracks. Our vehicles moved from the staging area into a line-up area and then to wash points as they became available. I put HHC on one line, A and C Cos on a second line, and B and C Cos on the

remaining line. This was a twenty-four hour operation until completion.

Each tank had to pull the power plant (engine) to clean the inside of the hull. The inside and outside of the tank had to be spotless. Each wash point was furnished with cleaning materials and high pressure steam cleaners to assist. There were two mobile cranes to assist in pulling and replacing power plants. Each vehicle went through a series of inspections as the crew finished cleaning portions of the tank. The access roads along the wash points were narrow.

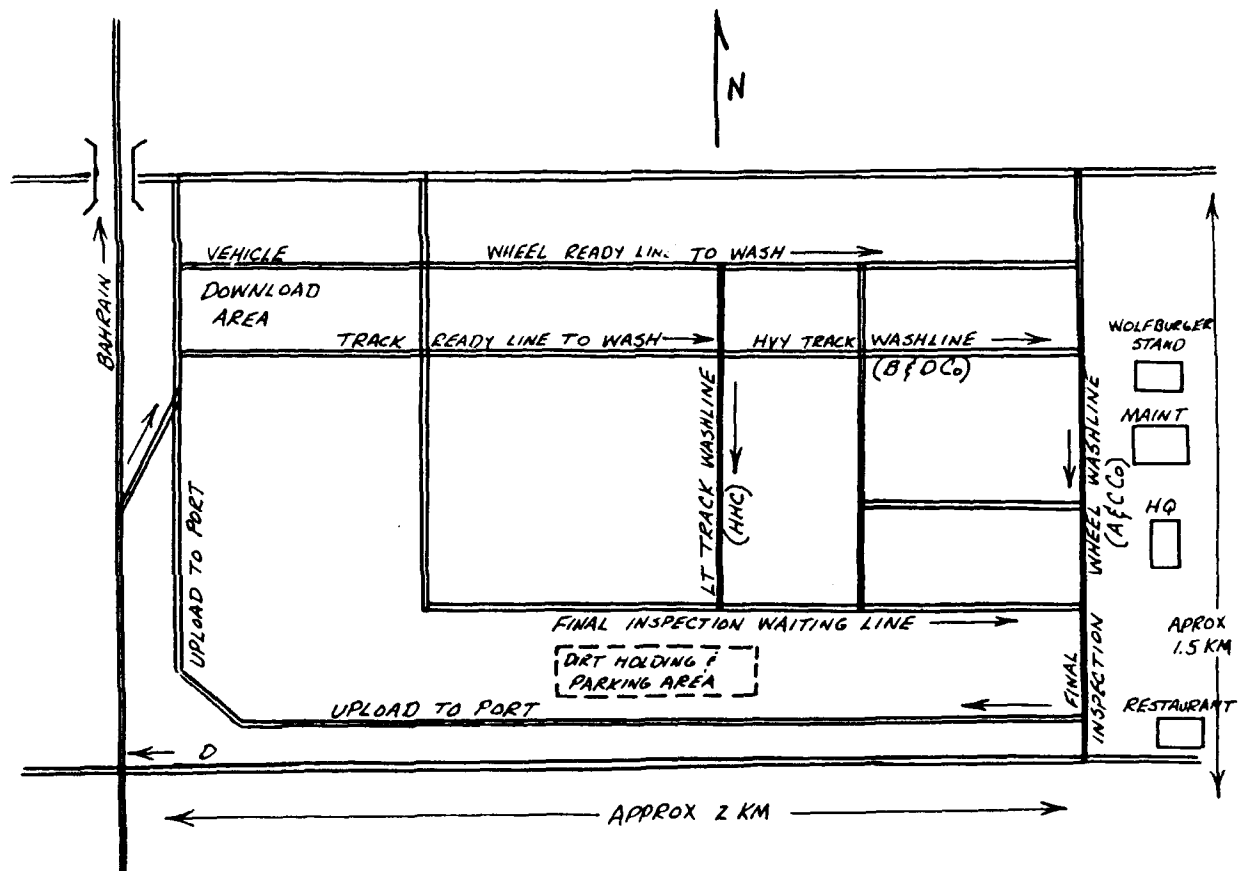
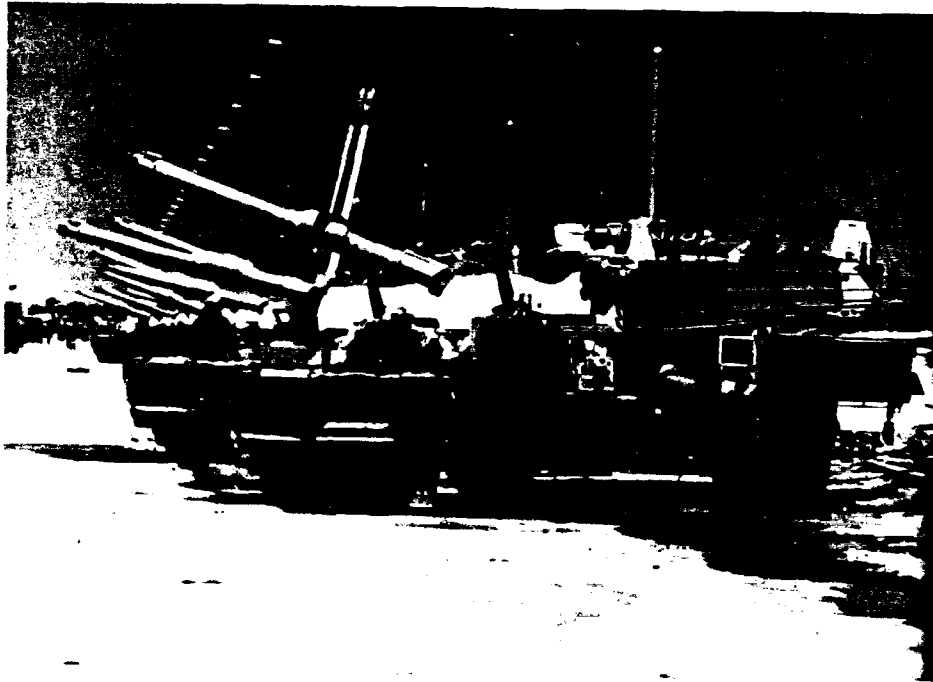


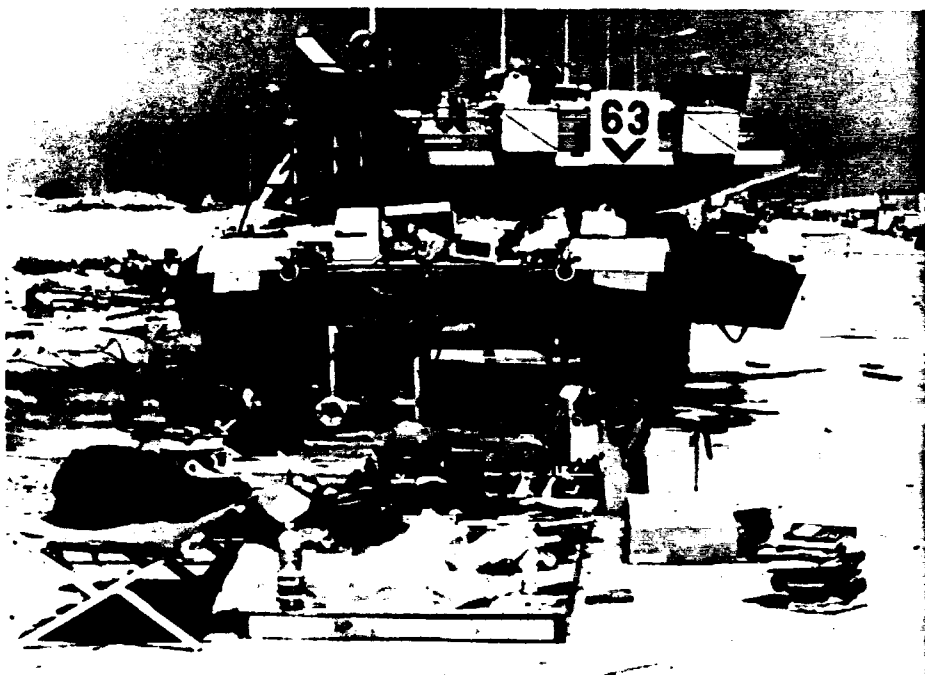
Diagram #70. Wash Rack Layout.



A tank on the track vehicle wash rack at port. Notice the power plants on the ground. Notice all the parts from inside the turret on top of the tank. The hoist from one of the mobile cranes can be seen above the tank line.



Track vehicle wash rack at night.



Tank crews worked themselves to the point of exhaustion. Once they were on the wash rack, they put forth an all out effort until the mission was complete. Notice the cots for rest and all the equipment taken out of the tank, in addition to the power plant.



SGT Mayes scraping the dirt out of the hull of his tank. Many of these tanks still had dirt from the FRG in them.

I personally supervised the operation of the track vehicle wash rack. I lived on the wash rack for the next ninety-six hours. The Company Commanders did likewise. This was a critical phase of our returning home. For twelve hours, the water pumps went out. This caused delay, I personally stayed on my radio and ushered the cranes around to the tanks as they required lift. Lift capability was the primary limiting aspect to the operation.

At the end of ninety-six hours, we had pulled fifty-eight tank engines, cleaned the tanks, reset the engines and back decks, and passed the customs inspections. There was an

incredible amount of military equipment discarded at the trash points. Fortunately, the division policed up all the serviceable material upon their departure. We replaced all the air filters with new filters and new seals. All the M88s, APCs, and BFVs also completed the cleaning process. This was a knock-down, drag-out affair.

As the vehicles passed their last inspection, they were moved to the customs final inspection site. All the correct shipping documentation was placed on the vehicle and the track vehicles were moved by HET to a staging area at the port of Ad Dammam. A Co also cleaned and serviced the T72 tank.

We had a little trouble at port when one of the plow tanks was off-loaded from the HET. The plow took part of the asphalt with it as it came off the HET. We repaired the asphalt and managed to soothe the OIC of the port who was about to have a baby over the issue.

I went back to the Khobar Towers for some sleep as the last track vehicle was accepted by customs. MAJ Garrity was already about twenty-four hours into the wheel wash rack operation.

Wheel Wash Rack Operation

I caught up with MAJ Garrity at the wheel wash rack after a few hours of sleep. The wheel wash rack was about a fifteen minute drive from Khobar Towers. The Army was using part of an airstrip. The engineers constructed a huge wash rack operation to handle thousands of trucks. We just had to wait our turn. MAJ Garrity seemed to have everything under control and all the

right people seemed to be available to get the job done. I left my driver with his vehicle and hitchhiked back to the Khobar Towers.

The inspectors at the wheel wash rack were ruthless. They inspected for the smallest amount of dirt and they looked everywhere imaginable. I spent the next day on the wheel wash rack with MAJ Garrity. The only solution was to keep washing until the vehicles passed inspection.

Each vehicle unloaded all its equipment at a staging area, then moved up to the wash point. When the vehicle passed the inspection, it returned to collect its belongings.

There was no easy way to wash these vehicles to the inspector's satisfaction. There was a great deal of frustration and drivers began to tire after a full day of washing only one vehicle. We eventually had to bring in more personnel to assist as the drivers became tired. One group of HEMMT drivers spent three days washing their vehicles.

All of the wheel cargo trucks and trailers were directed to have a secondary load. We left six cargo HEMMTs empty to load spare track to ship back to Ft. Riley. The track we were supposed to load was given to someone else. BG Carter instructed us to keep them empty because there was more track to load at port. The vehicles were driven to a holding area on a major airstrip for safe keeping after they passed inspection. MAJ Garrity and CW3 LeMay returned to this area later to check for secondary loads. They re-shifted some of the loads to make sure all vehicles had a secondary load. The extra HEMMTs we

received from the National Guard and Reserves were to be returned to their rightful owners as they arrived in the port of Houston.

It took MAJ Garrity and his wheel team over four days to get all the wheel vehicles through the inspection. This was a round-the-clock operation--same as the track wash rack.



The wheel wash rack. The scaffolding is all part of the plumbing assembled by the engineers. There were three wash lines with about thirty wash points each. Almost a hundred trucks were being washed at a time.



Holding area for wheel vehicles after final customs inspections. Even a Battalion Commander could not get back in this area after the vehicle was accepted and parked.

Time Off

With all the vehicles turned in for shipping, we had some time off. Soldiers were allowed to go downtown as long as one of their leaders was present--SFC or above. Taxi cabs were available at the back gate of Khobar Towers. Almost all the soldiers had a chance to make at least one trip into town. The battalion was given some money to purchase souvenirs. We eventually decided on an Arabic dagger, brass plate, and some Arab artifacts to put in the trophy case back home. We put the war trophies with them.

Soldiers, for the most part, enjoyed the leisure time. Dominoes, cards, and books became commonplace. Briefings were given by leaders and the chaplain on a wide range of subjects dealing with going home. We did everything we could to make sure the soldier was mentally and emotionally prepared to meet his spouse, family, and friends again.

A great deal of time was spent making sure the soldiers were not attempting to smuggle unauthorized souvenirs, weapons, ammunition, or explosives home. Leaders executed detailed inspection of baggage and all soldiers were informed there would be one final inspection at the airport. The drug and explosive sniffing dogs were brought in one day and we did a sweep of the battalion with my permission.

CPT Hall finally located a TA-50 site for soldiers to receive issued boots and personal items of issue clothing and equipment. Our soldiers who needed boots finally received some replacements. CPT Phillips gathered up all the chemical antidotes for turn-in--no more atrophine or nerve agent pills or valium.

MAJ Cook finished his detail at the division wash rack and moved back into the billets with us. The twelve soldiers returned to their units.

Two days before departure, I briefed the thirty soldiers volunteering for the rear detachment. They would stay until the end of August and were responsible for loading all the equipment on the ships. LT MacMullen was the OIC.



CPT Martin giving the cold shoulder to a Saudi Arabian taxi cab driver. There were so many taxis that soldiers bartered for the best price. CPT Martin was an expert.



Downtown Dhahran. Seems like every Saudi Arabian citizen owned a white Toyota, Nissan, or Datsun pickup truck. They were everywhere, even during the war. Vehicle of choice.



CPT Clidas, CPT Beals, and CPT Wock downtown. Note the sign behind them in English and Arabic.

Going to the Airport

Our last day in country was the usual "hurry up and wait" for which the Army is famous. We cleared the billets and went over the manifest one last time. Soldiers took their A and B duffel bags out to the truck. After waiting about three hours in the shade of the large beer tent set up as an entertainment site for the troops, we loaded the buses and were transported to the airport.



Soldiers stacking their A and B duffel bags while awaiting word to load the buses. The bottoms of the bags are painted sand brown and are stenciled with the soldier's name, rank, SSAN, and unit.



A touch of humor. The bus would not start, so the soldiers unloaded the bus. The bus driver is attempting to push start his own bus. Khobar Towers is in the background.



CPT Wock, CW2 Bratcher, CPT Phillips, and
CPT Martin waiting to leave on the bus to
the airport.



CPT Hall and CW3 LeMay sitting in the shade waiting for the "all clear" signal to move to the airport. Note CW3 LeMay, like all the soldiers returning home, has his combat patch sewn on his right sleeve.



LT Ortega, LT Ward, CPT Phillips, and CPT Hodge sit in the shade awaiting the bus ride to the airport.



LT Okiyama with members of the
Communications Plt awaiting the bus to the
airport.



CPT Loche, SSG Curry, CPT Hall, and CW3 LeMay in the shade awaiting the bus to the airport. CW3 LeMay is sitting on the case for one of the lap-top computers.



MAJ Cook and LT Ortega awaiting the bus to the airport in the entertainment tent. Soldiers had to wear and carry their Kelvar helmet, protective mask, LBE, weapon, GPS, and night vision goggles onto the plane.

At the airport, we lined up. There was a Mobile Army Surgical Hospital (MASH) unit of about sixty soldiers processing with us. They all had civilian ice chests and stereo boxes. They had no LBE, wore soft caps and unauthorized sunglasses, and all of them were wearing new desert boots. This did not go unnoticed by our soldiers. We looked like disciplined, hardened combat troops. The soldiers made the comparison and were proud of who they were and what they represented. A VII Corps liaison officer, a LTC, walked up and remarked how he was glad to see some real soldiers. He, too, had made the comparison.



At the airport. The battalion's final check before boarding the airplane home. The large building shown was the final customs inspection check for all the soldiers' belongings.

We waited our turn outside the final inspection point. We finally went into the inspection point carrying our rucksacks and two duffel bags in addition to our other combat gear and sensitive items. Customs inspectors emptied all our bags, inspected them; then we repacked and loaded them on the truck going to the plane. In the holding area, we received free drinks and hamburgers. Finally, we boarded the plane to go home.

CHAPTER 19

HOMECOMING

12 MAY 1991 - 28 JUNE 1991

The Freedom Bird

When the plane lifted off, a wild cheer was heard throughout the airplane. It was one of several emotional outbursts that occurred on the way home. Being treated with special kindness and generosity by the stewardesses did not go unnoticed or unappreciated by the soldiers. Each phase of the trip home seemed to bring a greater sense of relief and joy.

We stopped in New York for a short layover--another cheer from the soldiers. They let us off the plane for about thirty minutes to buy reading materials or to stretch our legs. When we went back on the plane, we did a sensitive items check. One soldier discovered he was missing his PVS-7 night vision goggles.

I personally interviewed the soldier. He said he brought the goggles on the plane and put them under his seat. Now they were gone. I was really angry. I challenged him and asked for witnesses. He had none. We searched the plane, storage compartment by storage compartment. Just when we had given up, SSG Daniel W. Kramer revealed he had found an extra pair of goggles on the bus to the airplane in Dhahran. They were the pair belonging to the soldier. The soldier was lying. He had left them on the bus. He caused us another one hour delay. CPT

Clidas imposed non-judicial action at a later date. We really needed this--despite all our precautions.

We finally landed at Topeka, KS, at 1200 hours on 13 May 1991. Another cheer from the soldiers. As we walked off the plane, our hearts surged. Crowds of people waving American flags and yellow ribbons stood just off the tarmac. They were cheering and shouting. We all walked a little taller as we disembarked. The process was streamlined from the plane to the bus. We did not even have to unload our own bags--that was a first.



Soldiers getting off the plane in Topeka.
Note combat patch on their right shoulder.

Statement by MAJ Cook, the Battalion S3, describing the trip home on 12 May 1991:

The trip home was on a 747 airliner. I can't remember the name of the airplane. We manifested three hundred ninety-nine personnel on my chalk and again I was designated the chalk commander. We flew out late in the evening of 12 May with the first stop-over in Brussels, Belgium. This chalk was difficult to manifest and control since the personnel were divided among four units, to include a National Guard medical unit and some individuals going to the States on emergency leave.

Counting of heads and maintaining control of sensitive items at New York created a minor problem and delay in our departure for Topeka; however, we were able to resolve it in a short time. The only problem of significance on the trip home was the overflowing toilets--too many people, not enough serviceable lavatories.

Topeka was a welcome sight. Crowds with signs lined the entrance fence of the airfield to welcome planes home. We didn't delay long in getting from the plane to the buses for the last hour of our journey. I remember the warm, bright, sunny morning on which we arrived and all the yellow ribbons along Interstate 70 from Topeka to Ft. Riley. All I had in mind was seeing my wife again, for it seemed like it had been years instead of months since being with her.

The bus ride from Topeka to Ft. Riley was fantastic. The entire route, some sixty miles, was lined with yellow ribbons attached to the highway markers. We felt great. What a great country the United States of America is.

Truck drivers coming in the opposite direction would come on the CB radio and say things to the bus driver like, "Is that there some more of them Big Red One guys?" When the bus driver replied, they would respond with, "You tell 'em we're awful proud of them."

It was the type of spontaneity reflecting the deep sense of awareness and pride the country was feeling toward their returning heroes. It was our first exposure of how deeply our country was committed to us, our mission, and our success. Being made aware of this commitment brought a whole new wave of emotion to the soldiers. All of us could feel a sense of pride bordering on tears.

Arrival at Ft. Riley

At Marshall Army Airfield, we came off the buses and filed into a hangar. A reception committee of CSM Stockton and the 1SGs met us. They took care of everything. We turned over all our sensitive items and weapons to them. We then filed outside the hangar where CSM Stockton briefed us on the procedure for being welcomed in the second hangar.

We filed into the second hangar in two groups--one from the left and one from the right. People were everywhere. All our families and friends were there. People were cheering and crying and waving banners and flags. It was a wild scene. I was choked with emotion. I felt happy for the soldiers, happy for my family, and a great sense of relief in knowing the war was finally over.

Statement by MAJ Cook, the Battalion S3, describing his arrival at Ft. Riley on 14 May 1991:

Ft. Riley was a welcome sight to see. CPT Bond was there to meet us as the representative of our advance party. They did a great job preparing for our arrival. Elements were present at the airfield to collect weapons and sensitive items and to account for arrivals. This allowed the troops to be with their

families and to be released directly to enjoy the homecoming. We shuttled through the in-processing, formed up into units, and marched to the next hangar where we were greeted by families, friends, MG Rhame, and the division band.

It was heartwarming and a very emotional time. The best part was holding close my ninety-eight pounds of dynamite and catching up on the tears and smiles we missed for the past five months. Yes, it was a beautiful day.

MG Rhame, COL Moreno, and LTC Gross were there to meet us. As we went into a formation in front of them, MG Rhame praised the soldiers' achievements and made sure the welcoming crowd knew the extent of the soldiers' sacrifices and heroics.

My wife and family were there to meet me, as were all the soldiers' families and friends. Even the single soldiers' parents had driven great distances to be there to meet their sons. Members of the Junction City and Manhattan communities served drinks at the refreshment stand throughout all the welcomes, and many came to every welcome no matter what time the soldiers arrived.

Soldiers with children born in their absence were singled out by MG Rhame and presented with their newborn baby. CPT Clidas and MAJ Garrity were presented with their new son and daughter, respectively. It was an extremely emotional time. After the kind words by MG Rhame, all hell broke loose as the soldiers joined their families.



Soldiers, being led by a guide, come in from the right side of the hangar. MG Rhame is on stage applauding.



LTC Marlin's wife, Peggy, giving him a preliminary kiss while the rest of the soldiers file into the hangar.



MG Rhame speaks to the troops and welcomes them from a stage with a huge American flag in the background. COL Moreno looks on.



The cheering crowd inside the hangar. Everyone had a favorite son, father, husband, and/or friend to welcome home.



Welcome home banners decorating the hangar. The one with the Wyras (green, winged dragon) is for the battalion and was done by our spouses.

LTC Marlin's Welcome Home

Like all the soldiers, my family was there to meet me. I was so happy to see them. I had arrived on my daughter Michele's 18th birthday. I picked out my two duffel bags from the pile inside the hangar, put them in the trunk of the car, and went home. We all had four days off before our first duty day at the battalion.

At home, we celebrated my homecoming and Michele's birthday. The house's exterior was decorated with yellow ribbons and welcome home signs. After opening gifts and just

being together, I fell asleep in the middle of the living room floor.



Michele with a birthday cake and LTC Marlin's welcome home cookie with candles. The entire house was decorated with balloons, banners, and signs welcoming LTC Marlin home.



LTC Marlin asleep on the living room floor on his first day home. Mark is asleep on the couch and Michele is still celebrating her birthday.

I returned to the hangar the next day to be on hand for the arrival of LTC Fake and his soldiers. He, like LTC Gross, LTC Hand, LTC Hawkins, and LTC Gingrich, were more than contemporaries; they were good friends. LTC Fake was the last one to arrive. MAJ Garrity was the OIC for our last group of soldiers.

Post Gulf War Activities

After a short four day rest, the battalion worked for five working days. On the first formation with the battalion, we uncased the colors. We were officially home. During these five

days, we executed sensitive items check, helped the soldiers settle in, and recovered all their stored property. Soldiers put in for up to a thirty day leave and it was approved. Soldiers not on leave continued to get the billeting and motor pool area opened and cleaned up.

Yellow ribbons and welcome home signs showed support everywhere.



The Family Support Center at the end of the Gulf War.

On the 26th of May, the Junction City High School graduation took place. My daughter, along with an extremely high percentage of Army brats, graduated. It was a special day.

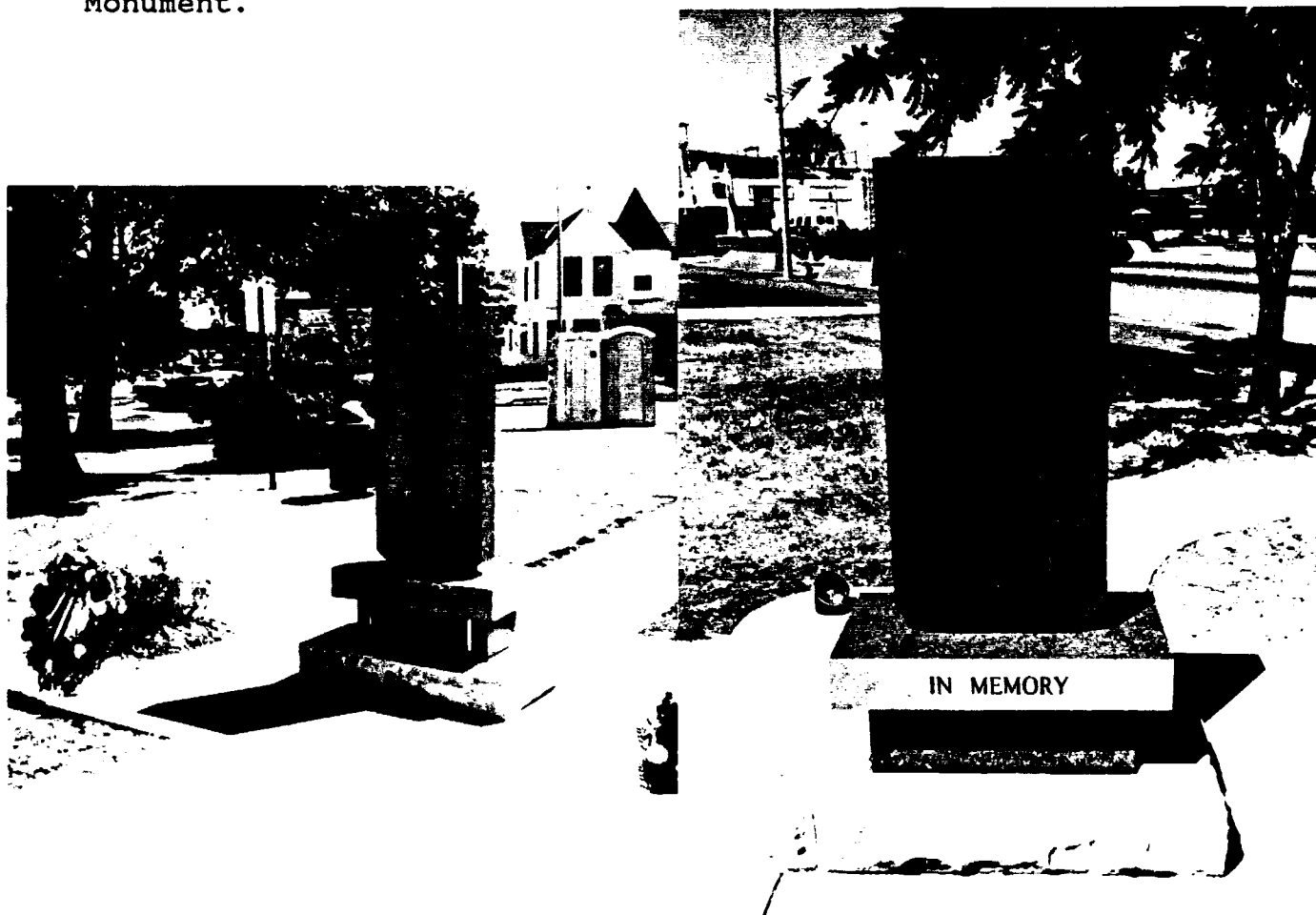
During one part of the graduation ceremony, the guest speaker asked all the Gulf War veterans to stand up. The graduating class of 1991 gave us a standing ovation. It was difficult to fight back the tears of emotion at having our own children salute us, their parent or parents. The teenagers had also endured a difficult time.

At the end of the graduation ceremony, SFC Martindale thanked me for making him stay in the desert and return on schedule with the battalion. He, like me, had never anticipated such an outpouring of emotion on his homecoming. He was glad I made him stay to be a part of it. He deserved it.



The Junction City High School graduation.

A memorial monument dedication was made in the Junction City Park. The monument was dedicated to the twenty-one soldiers of the 1st Inf Div who died in combat during the Gulf War. The monument was placed adjacent to the Vietnam Memorial Monument.



The memorial monument for those who died in the Gulf War while serving with the 1st Inf Div. The names of the dead are inscribed on the reverse side of the monument.

The battalion participated in four parades to celebrate the victory in the Gulf. We sent soldiers from the battalion to participate in the parade in Washington, D.C. and in New York City. Those going to the parades were issued desert boots. I

chose not to go to these ceremonies. The soldiers who did attend brought back glowing reports they shared with the other soldiers. We all watched the parades on television and felt a great sense of pride.

The other two parades took place in Kansas--one at Junction City and one at Manhattan. MG Rhame was the grand marshall. C Co, with CPT Torrence, marched in the Manhattan parade, and a mixed group of soldiers marched in the Junction City parade. All wore their DCUs.

On 14 June 1991, a battalion picnic was held at Moon Lake on Ft. Riley. We had a cookout. Peggy and I were farewelled. I presented the ladies who were company leaders, area leaders, office assistants, newsletter editor, and special projects individuals with a certificate of appreciation for their family support efforts and I thanked each one personally. I also farewelled about six officers who were in the process of departing the battalion. MAJ Garrity made the presentation of a saber to me, and CSM Stockton made the presentation of a hand-decorated clock. My parting remarks were the deep gratitude I felt at having served with such superior non-commissioned officers and officers. I started to cry several times and had to regain my composure.

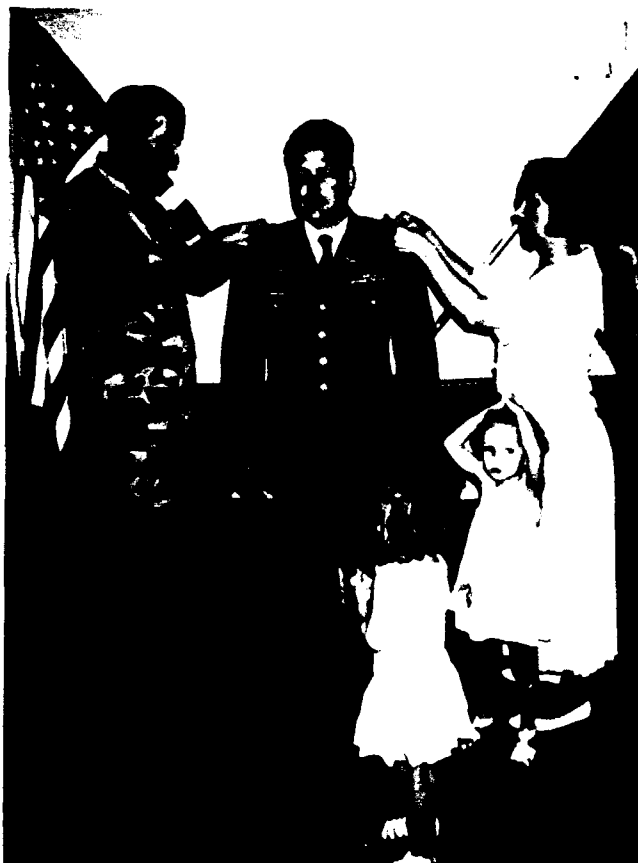


MAJ Garrity presenting LTC Marlin with a
saber as a farewell gift. Also recognizable
in the photo are Mr. Corbo on the left side
and CPT Paluso on the right side.



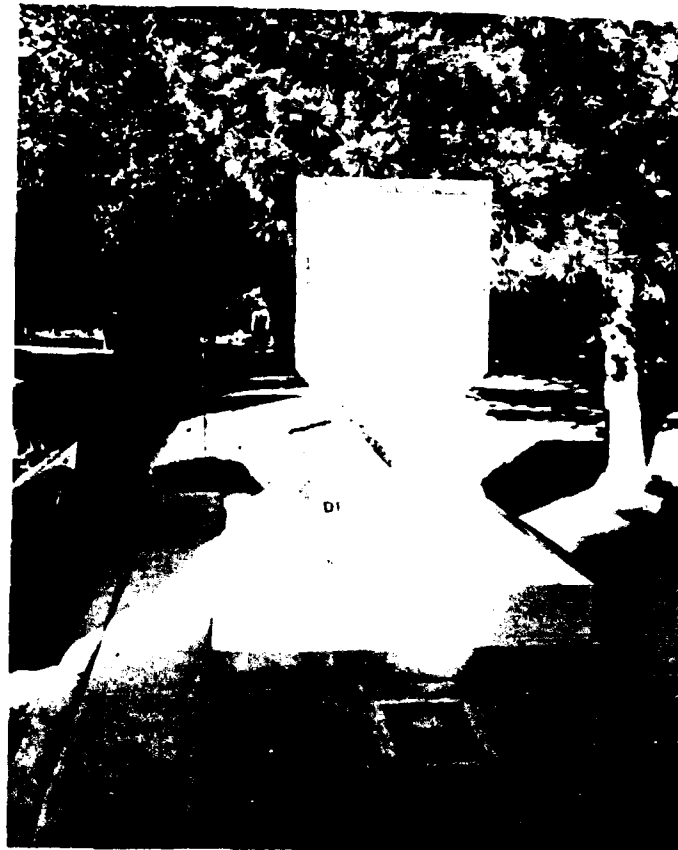
LTC Marlin making his parting remarks and thanks. The "Big Bust of 89" t-shirt is from the Idaho fire-fighting days. MAJ Garrity and CPT Wock stand in the background.

On 1 June 1991, we promoted LT Thompson to CPT Thompson.
We still had great faith in his abilities.



LTC Marlin and LT Thompson's wife, Carol,
promote LT Thompson to CPT in the Regimental
Room of the battalion headquarters.

On 14 June 1991, the division unveiled a memorial monument in front of the division headquarters. The monument was a four-sided figure dedicated to the four conflicts in which the division had participated. Mr. Trygg, our sponsor for the appropriation of the M109 vans, was the chief architect and fundraiser. What a great American!



The new memorial monument in front of division headquarters. Note Desert Storm is inscribed on the base.

On 27 June 1991, we presented the soldiers with awards at a battalion formation in the motor pool. The previous night, working with CPT Loche, we had asked for and received many

favours to get all the medals, green book covers, orders, and certifications to complete the awards. I was determined to make the awards before my change of command.

At the ceremony, several family members and friends attended. I wish there had been more, but it was short notice. I was running out of time. CSM Stockton posted the colors. We played the national anthem. I then gave a speech over the public address system I referred to as "I remember." I recited where we had been and all the events transpiring to bring us to this point. I told the soldiers they earned these awards and they should wear them proudly. I personally presented each soldier in HHC his award. MAJ Garrity, MAJ Cook, CSM Stockton, and SGM Neel accompanied each of the tank Company Commanders to assist in presenting their awards. As the awards were presented, the music from "Voices That Care" played in the background.

At a brigade formation on the same day, COL Moreno presented all ARCOMs for valor, the CIBs, and the CMBs to the deserving soldiers.

Battalion Change of Command

On 28 June 1991, I changed command. The division was having two battalion changes of command every Tuesday and Friday for about four weeks running. Our change of command was on Friday morning. After listening to one serious farewell speech after another, I added a touch of humor to my speech. At the

end, I gave the serious side. Several times I lost my composure and had to pause to regain it. It was a very emotional time.



COL Moreno presenting LTC Marlin with the Meritorious Service Medal and BSM during the battalion change of command (rehearsal).



LTC Marlin presenting the colors at his change of command. At Ft. Riley, the outgoing and incoming commander served as the commander of troops for the ceremony.



CPT Clidas, CPT Beals, CPT Martin, CPT Torrence, and CPT Wock at the presentation of the colors during the battalion change of command.

In many ways, I felt I had run out of time. Our equipment had not returned from overseas and there seemed to be so much more I wanted to accomplish.

Division Review Ceremony

On 4 July 1991, the division held a review ceremony at Camp Forsythe. I attended. All the soldiers were wearing their DCUs. As my old battalion passed in review, I admired them. They really looked good. The battalion had two new battle streamers added to the colors and had been recommended for a distinguished unit award. More importantly, all of them had come home safely.

CHAPTER 20

RECONSTITUTION AND CONCLUSION

29 JUNE 1991 - 31 DECEMBER 1991

Personnel Status

The change of command was timely as the battalion was at a critical junction with regard to reconstitution. With LTC Westholm firmly at the helm, a new course was set for the battalion.

LTC Westholm was the most noticeable of a series of personnel changes affecting the battalion over the next six months. CPT Torrence became the HHC Commander as CPT Clidas departed for duty in the FRG. CPT Hall became the new C Co Commander. CPT Wock was assigned to the Department of Military Science at Boise University in Idaho. Of the four Tank Company Commanders, only CPT Martin remained in command. Following the battalion change of command, the staff began its transition. MAJ Cook became the Deputy Inspector General. CPT Phillips returned to duty at the post hospital. CW2 Bratcher returned to Ft. Knox and his family. LT Wakefield was assigned to the post hospital. LT Jerrells took command of a Trailblazer Plt in the 101st Military Intelligence Bn. CPT Hodge became the Battalion Assistant S3. CW3 LeMay was sent to the Republic of Korea. CPT Thompson departed for his military intelligence officer's advance course at Ft. Huachuca, Arizona.

The new assignments for lieutenants was also long overdue. LT Corbo departed for his armor officer's advanced course at Ft.

Knox. LT Wiser became the Mortar Plt Leader as LT Powers departed for duty with the 12th Chemical Co. LT Cook became the new Scout Plt Leader as LT Ward became the new Support Plt Leader. LTs MacMullen, Ashford, Law, and Lee became Company XOs. LT Weiner became the Brigade HHC XO. LT Brown became the Battalion S3's Chemical Officer.

With all the officers changing duty positions or departing the battalion, the cornerstone of the battalion was the senior NCOs. For the most part, the senior NCOs remained stable for the next six months and provided the battalion the institutional continuity required for reconstitution. The exceptions to this were the immediate retirements of SFC Hill, SFC Wilson, and SFC Martindale. SFC Patton was sent for duty as the BMS of the 2nd Bn, 34th Ar.

The enlisted ranks initially swelled due to the soldiers returning from the draw-down of American soldiers in Europe. However, the eventual draw-down of the Army counterbalanced its initial influx of enlisted personnel and the battalion leveled out.

Over the next six months, CPT Paluso, CPT Loche, LT Wakefield, CPT Beals, and LT McBroom would leave the Army for civilian life. CPT Williams was assigned for duty with the Division G2. 1SG Powell became the Battalion S2 NCOIC. SFC Boudreau was promoted and assigned as the 1SG of F Co, 701st Main Spt Bn. 1SG Thiede, 1SG Hurley, and 1SG Lightsey were selected to attend the Sergeant Major Academy. Within a brief six-month period, less than half of the officers and senior NCOs

with Desert Storm experience were still assigned to the battalion.

With the equipment not due to arrive from Saudi Arabia until early August, LTC Westholm had time to focus on personnel administration and wrapping up all the loose ends I left behind. He met his soldiers and brought in a whole new team of key leaders for the fresh start so important to the battalion. The personnel turn-over was appropriate and timely.

Equipment

The equipment arrived in early August. The unit had prepared the facilities and everything was ready for its arrival. Needless to say--the blinding flash of the obvious--the equipment was in worse shape when it arrived than when it departed Ft. Riley in January 1991.

All the wheel vehicles were in desperate need of servicing. The inherited tank fleet needed a close maintenance inspection, servicing, and requisition of repair parts. Prior to the equipment's arrival, MAJ Garrity established a detailed maintenance program to help recondition the equipment. The motor pool was prepared, and intense maintenance operations began the day the equipment arrived. The object was to recondition the fleet of vehicles as soon as humanly possible and be ready to go to war again if called.

The numerous company changes of command were timely with regard to the equipment's arrival. Although one hundred percent inventories were completed in the desert prior to deployment,

change of command inventories began immediately. This detailed accountability procedure accelerated what otherwise would have been a long, drawn-out affair. However, this is not to say it was easy. The equipment did not arrive in a sequentially correct pattern to expedite the inventories. Much teeth gashing and anguish took place to get everything sorted out. Still, it was the best approach under the circumstances.

Overall, the battalion was in better shape than before the war because of all the new equipment it received as part of the deployment preparation. Furthermore, the battalion retained their seven MILVANS. These were kept on a permanent basis in the motor pool for storage and deployment purposes. The battalion was short some items and in excess of others--including a spare HMMWV engine and two spare tank engines. A sorting out of property across the division was taking place.

Although the equipment had arrived and was ready to be worked on, the logistics system continued to be a pull system for the next two to three months. The DISCOM also had to move back into its facilities and reconstitute. The lack of supply discipline and repair parts haunting us in the desert continued for several more months.

Training

Training began immediately with the initial focus on a detailed maintenance education program in preparation for the return of the equipment. UCFT training was initiated, as was individual training.

The battalion was scheduled for tank gunnery in October. The intent was to give the battalion an immediate training goal in an effort to reconstitute as quickly as possible. The battalion literally "shot the range down" in their first tank gunnery with the M1A1, 120mm tanks. All of the platoons qualified on the PKB and the battalion retained its title of "Top Guns." Furthermore, LTC Westholm had established the leadership of his command as being creditable, competent, and competitive. A new winning team was in place to continue the "Thunderbolt" tradition.

The second major collective training event was the battalion's support of the brigade's training program for attending the NTC in March 1992. The battalion performed numerous support missions and OPFOR duty to help train TF 2-16 and TF 3-37. This was a demanding schedule and gave all the new leaders, and old leaders in new positions, a taste of the field. The battalion was reconstituted.

Capturing the History

I learned many lessons in the desert and at Ft. Riley. Upon my arrival at the Army War College at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, I attempted to seek an opportunity to write a historical account of the battalion. I felt strongly about making a contribution on behalf of the battalion. Initially, I found it difficult to obtain support.

I was also very disappointed in the Army's approach to capturing the history of the units participating in Desert

Shield/Storm. There seemed to be an over-reliance in the use of the CALL team to capture significant aspects of the war. Persons tended to mistake the CALL team for history. In my opinion, Desert Storm commanders attending the War Colleges should be required to write the history of their unit in lieu of the Military Studies Paper (MSP). Furthermore, the Army should demand Battalion Commanders write a detailed AAR from a historical perspective and should have provided the format.

Finally, in December of 1991, I received permission to write the history of the battalion as my MSP. My faculty advisor, COL Spruill, was the main catalyst for getting the approval.

Though I retained a great amount of material in my personal effects from the war, I was surprised by how much I did not have in my possession. I had the full support of LTC Westholm, but I was surprised by how many archives had already disappeared. In a mere four months, a tremendous amount of historical archives had found its way to the circular file or had been destroyed or lost.

In addition to the excessive amount of hours and efforts to compile the gathered data, my travels, letters, and phone calls took me to Munich and Aschaffenburg, FRG, Ft. Polk, Ft. Knox, Ft. Hood, and Ft. Riley. I underestimated the amount of research required for this type of project. Furthermore, my failure to capture the data as an active Battalion Commander was a big mistake. This is another reason why the Army should have gone to the extreme of making Battalion Commanders write their

AAR prior to leaving command, or with the understanding they would be required to write their AAR after leaving command.

Lessons Learned

I learned some valuable lessons during Desert Storm. The CALL team from Ft. Knox accurately recorded the majority of our experiences and lessons learned. I prefer to emphasis only those lessons I thought critical to our Army's combat readiness.

Deployment

A battalion must be ready and trained to deploy. In order to do this, shipping containers and materials must be readily available. Personnel administration and health requirements must be constantly maintained and reviewed. The procedures must be practiced and rehearsed.

The shipping of the unit's equipment and personnel must be accomplished with the unit's end state in mind--ready to fight upon arrival. Many of the shipping procedures used are logical, but out of context with the overall mission of the unit (communication security equipment must be shipped in a MILVAN and are not allowed to be shipped with the vehicle, small arms ammunition cannot be removed from the container and stowed properly in the ammunition boxes designed for this purpose on the vehicle, etc., etc.). These types of rules cause frustration, lack efficiency, and detract from the unit's ability to fight upon arrival.

Unit integrity must take precedence over logistic efficiency. The chain of command must be in charge of the

deployment operation from start to finish. A commander's command and control must be absolute and not relegated to piecemeal missions with a piecemeal force. Theater port operations and logistic operations must be designed to support the commander's command and control, not the staff member's command and control. Staff members need to understand they will achieve greater efficiency supporting the commander's command and control.

Training

The platoon is the key to maintaining training proficiency. Each platoon must have a written tactical SOP. Each Tank Commander in a platoon must have a copy of the platoon SOP. Each member of the platoon must know the SOP and be trained to execute it. The platoon SOP maintains a certain level of training proficiency and saves training time by reducing redundant training. Tank gunnery must be measured by platoon gunnery qualification. Crew qualification is a gate prior to platoon qualification, nothing more.

Pre-combat inspections prior to deployment for field exercises must be executed. The inspection should be done in the motor pool. Individual uniforms and equipment, vehicle maintenance preparation, vehicle load plans, and individual's knowledge of the mission and operation should all be inspected thoroughly. Time must be allowed to correct all deficiencies prior to departing for the field.

Leadership training must focus on the Platoon Leader. He is usually the youngest, most inexperienced officer in the

battalion. More so than any other officer in the battalion, he is required to fight as a Tank Commander, move as part of a formation, command and control his platoon by going back and forth on two radio nets, and enforce standards at the individual soldier level.

Maintenance

The Army's repair part system must support the battalion's ability to be as self-supportive as humanly possible. The Prescribed Load List (PLL) must be thorough and robust and supported with the Unit Level Logistic System (ULLS). Tool trucks, repair part trucks, and command post truck shelters must be provided to support the use of computers (dust-free environment), inventory, accountability, and mobility.

Tanks must be able to tow tanks as part of the recovery effort. Either a separate heat shield is required or a modification to the tank grill doors to divert the exhaust in order to prevent damage to the towed vehicles.

What makes a tank non-combat ready? We must determine exactly the minimum critical standard for fighting a combat vehicle and establish the maintenance deadline criteria from this point. If it becomes necessary to have a peacetime or training deadline criteria and a combat deadline criteria, then let's do it.

Logistics

The support platoon must be enhanced and significantly increased with equipment and personnel. At least two HMMWVs are required. Radios in the trucks are a must.

The supply system is a pull system at the battalion level. Either adjust the mission of the forward support battalions to the number of personnel and equipment available, or adjust the personnel and equipment of the support battalions to the assigned missions.

All DISCOMs should be required to deploy once a year to the National Training Center. At the training center, the DISCOM should exercise all of its operating systems in support of a rotating brigade. Commanders must stress the importance of deployment of the DISCOM as much as a maneuver brigade. Combat service support units need to be challenged and focus their effort on the needs of the maneuver battalions.

Commanders at all levels need to understand the philosophy of "taking care of the soldier" has an established priority. Water, food, medical supplies, bullets, and repair parts take precedence over telephones, hamburger stands, mail, movies, baseball cards, ice, pizza, and Post Exchange operations. Commanders ended up using more of their own resources supporting these non-essential items in an already established pull logistic system.

Command and Control

The S3 Section needs reproduction equipment and a place to operate it. A sheltered truck is required. The maneuver control system is a piece of junk and totally ineffective at battalion level.

Communications need enhancement. Mast antennas are required for all command post operations. Two radios are

required on every combat vehicle. At least two AM radios are required to communicate over long distances. The Global Positioning System is a must for every combat vehicle. Lap-top computers must be available at staff and company levels.

A Command Group must be organized and resourced with an appropriate doctrine or SOP. The Command Group should have a specific Table of Organization and Equipment. The Command Group should operate similar to a platoon. The Command Sergeant Major of an infantry and tank battalion should be authorized a vehicle.

Combat Leadership

Any flaw in a person's leadership or character will be highlighted in combat. Leadership training and leadership development must be practiced and maintained at a high standard in peacetime to ensure the same standards in combat.

Prevention of fratricide is a leadership function. Technology may help reduce fratricide, but the ultimate solution is good training brought about by good, responsible leadership.

Conclusion

Throughout the deployment, I was constantly amazed by the professionalism and competence of the soldiers in my command. When it was time to fight, they were all ready. Their fears and uncertainties were controlled and purposely directed towards their mission. They were thoroughly proficient in their duties and eager to carry the fight to the enemy. The war validated our hard training and preparation. Some soldiers even remarked

that our training, especially at the NTC, was more difficult than the war. Their performance is a tribute to our Nation and the Armed Forces.